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THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF
THOMAS JOHN CLAGGETT

Thos. he. Claggett

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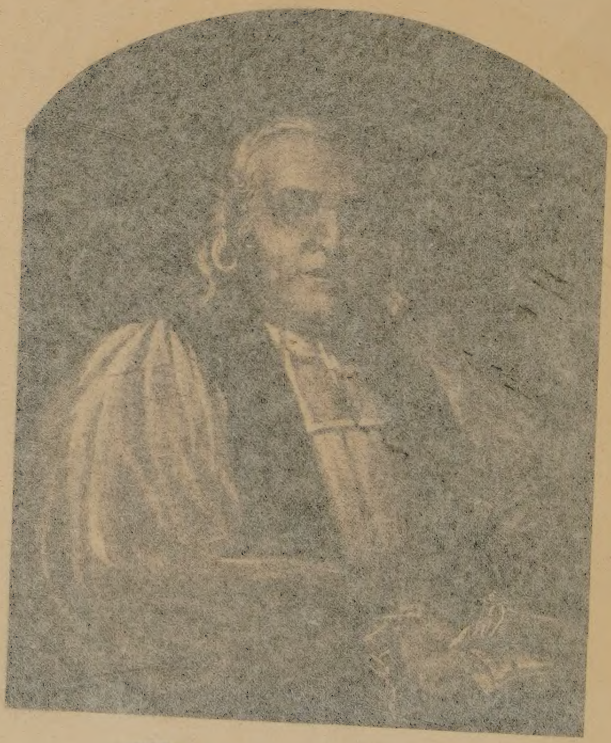
THOMAS JOHN CLAGGETT

FIRST BISHOP OF MARYLAND AND THE
FIRST BISHOP CONSECRATED IN AMERICA

BY

GEORGE B. UTLEY

The Lakeside Press
R. R. DONNELLEY & SONS CO.
CHICAGO
1913



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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Ancestry and Early Life	1
II.	Southern Maryland in Colonial Days	11
III.	Experiences in Country Parishes	25
IV.	Organization of the Maryland Church	38
V.	Election to the Episcopate	57
VI.	A New Vestry Act	76
VII.	The Plan of Visiting Members	83
VIII.	Contemporary Views of Maryland Parishes	94
IX.	The Bishop at Work	114
X.	The Convention of 1808 and the War of 1812	127
XI.	Election of a Suffragan	144
XII.	Closing Years	162
	Index	181

PREFACE

No apology is necessary perhaps for attempting this brief sketch of the life and times of the first bishop consecrated in the New World. The events in Bishop Claggett's life were not extraordinary nor did they effect any very marked influence upon the later history of the Church which he served for so many years. But the pictures, although fragmentary and ill-connected, which we find in his letters and journals of contemporary life and thought in Maryland a century and a quarter ago, are, we believe, of sufficient interest to be worth preserving.

As librarian of the Maryland Diocesan Library, at Baltimore, some years since, the author had ready access to the original sources in the way of letters, diaries and journals which are preserved in the archives of that institution and which he has freely drawn from in the preparation of this work. Stress of other duties has, however, delayed for several years the recasting of this gathered material into its present form. All documents quoted from, unless otherwise indicated, are in the Maryland Diocesan Library.

The author is not a theologian and is not, be it confessed, particularly interested in the theological doctrines and discussions of Claggett's day. He has, therefore, touched but lightly upon these features, being content in the endeavor to reproduce a more material picture of the life and times of the Maryland bishop and old-time Southern gentleman.

Acknowledgments are gratefully made to Mr. Lawrence C. Wroth, my successor at the Diocesan Library, for his very great kindness in verifying certain quotations and dates and for making many helpful suggestions; to Bernard C. Steiner, Ph. D., librarian of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, of Balti-

more, for reading and criticising the manuscript, particularly those portions pertaining to Maryland civil history; and to the Rev. F. M. Gibson, the present librarian of the Maryland Diocesan Library, for a number of courtesies, warmly appreciated.

GEORGE B. UTLEY.

Secretary's Office,
American Library Association,
Chicago, April 15, 1913.

CHAPTER I

ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE

Thomas John Claggett was born October 2, 1743, at White's Landing, on the Patuxent River, about two miles below Nottingham, in Prince George's County, southern Maryland. This little settlement was then of considerable commercial importance, boasting an extensive coastwise trade and a packet line to England.

Thomas John was the son of the Rev. Samuel Clagett, who was rector successively of Christ Church Parish, Calvert County, and William and Mary Parish, Charles County. His original ancestor in this country was Thomas Clagett,[1] who emigrated from England and settled on St. Leonard's Creek, in Calvert County, in 1671. This was but forty-two years after the first settlement of Kent Island, on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay, and but thirty-seven years after the English had landed at St. Mary's, on the extreme southern tip of the western shore. The land was even more primeval along St. Leonard's Creek. The first white man had settled there only about twenty years before, and when Thomas Clagett came probably a very small part of the land was under cultivation. Most of it was a wide forest where the Indian still hunted his game pretty much undisturbed by the intrusion of the pale face.

Family tradition affirms that the Clagetts were of Norman stock, and that the first of the name in England came across the Channel with the Conqueror and participated in the battle of Hastings. The Rev. John Eversfield, of Prince George's

[1] The genealogical data in this chapter are drawn from *The Bowies and their Kindred*, by W. W. Bowie, Washington, 1899.

County, whose wife was Bishop Claggett's aunt, kept a diary which is still preserved, and in which is stated: "Clagett of Houghton, County Cambridge, England, born prior to 1100, assumed in 1104 the arms as since borne by the family, namely: Ermine on a fess sable, three pheons, or; crest, an eagle's head, erased; ermine ducally crowned, or, between two wings sable. Motto, *Gratia Dei Grata;* translated, 'The acceptable grace of God.'" This description of the Clagett arms corresponds with that given in Burke's *English Heraldry.* It may be well here to state that the bishop was the first of his name in this country to spell the name with the double "g." When he went to England for holy orders in 1767 he made some study of the English records, which convinced him that, although his American ancestors spelled the name "Clagett," the proper way was "Claggett," and he immediately adopted the latter form. Contemporaries had many variations of his name; Cleget, Cleggett, Claggatt, and Claggitt being among those found.[1]

The earliest member of the family of whom we have any authentic record is Robert Claggett, who was born about 1490 at Malling, Kent County. His son, Richard, born about 1525, married a daughter of Sir Robert Gouder. Their son, George, was thrice mayor of Canterbury, in 1609, 1622 and 1632. He had at least two sons, Edward and Nicholas. The latter, who was born in 1609, became a Puritan and something of a philosopher. He also had two sons, both of them clergymen. The younger son, Nicholas, born in 1650, was for sixty years preacher at St. Mary's, at Bury St. Edmunds. His son, also named Nicholas, became a distinguished theologian and was elected Bishop of St. David's, in Wales, in 1739 and later became Bishop of Exeter. Dr. Norton in his "Life of Bishop Claggett (of Maryland)," says, "It is an interesting fact that the first bishop of Maryland was a descendant of Nicholas

[1] Collateral descendants spell the name "Clagett."

Claggett, who, during the reign of George the Second, was Bishop of St. David's, and afterwards of Exeter, England." This is an error; the Maryland Claggett's descent is through Edward, brother of the ancestor of the English bishop.

This Edward Claggett was born about 1605. Unlike his brother he was a staunch loyalist and held a colonel's commission in the army of Charles the First, being imprisoned at one time, it is said, in the Tower of London by the Puritans. He married Margaret Adams, daughter of Sir Thomas Adams, the Lord Mayor of London, and an author of some note. The names of five of their children are recorded: three daughters and two sons, Richard and Thomas.

Thomas Claggett, or Clagett, as he spelled it after coming to America, was born about 1635 or '40. For a time he was an officer in the king's navy. Leaving the service and his inherited estates in England, he emigrated to America in the autumn of 1670, arriving in Maryland early in 1671, and, as we have already said, settled on St. Leonard's Creek, near St. Leonard's Town, Calvert County.

In 1632, or some thirty-nine years before this, George Calvert, Lord Baltimore, a Roman Catholic, had obtained a patent of the territory named therein Maryland, and in 1634 his son and successor to the title sent over a colony which settled at St. Mary's, near the Potomac River, a few miles above its confluence with Chesapeake Bay. Although a large number of the colonists were Church of England men, yet the only ministers of religion sent over to them under the patronage of the Lord Baltimore were Jesuits. For the first sixteen years it is not known that there were any other religious teachers than these among them. From the fact that Roman Catholic priests were the only religious instructors in early Maryland the conclusion has often been drawn that most of the colonists were Roman Catholics, but historical research has shown this assumption to be incorrect.

About 1650 another colony came in from Virginia and settled mostly on the Severn River near where it enters the Bay, but a few settled on the Patuxent and West rivers. These new arrivals were mostly Puritans, dissenters from the Church of England, who did not find a congenial atmosphere in Virginia, where the Church had become established. Some fifteen years after they had settled in Maryland Quaker preachers came in among them and secured quite a following. Not far from this time, 1665, a number of Presbyterians came over from Scotland and located in Somerset County on the eastern shore, and in Prince George's County on the western shore. Their numbers, however, were small compared with other denominations. Through all these sections Church of England men were intermingled, and in some localities there were none of any other religious persuasion.

The population of the province increased very slowly. In 1692 there were only about 25,000 souls in Maryland. The Church of England possessed eighteen or twenty places of worship, but only four or five of her clergy were in the field. The Roman Catholics and the Quakers each constituted about one-twelfth of the total population. The proportion of Puritans, Presbyterians and Lutherans is not known. Such, however, was the influence of the Church of England adherents that in 1692 that church became the established church of the province by act of the General Assembly. The ten counties of which the province of Maryland then consisted were divided into thirty parishes, seventeen on the western shore and thirteen on the eastern shore. This movement for establishment was the direct outgrowth of the people's alarm at the conspicuous activity of the Jesuit priests in the colony, although the Protestants greatly outnumbered the Papists, as noted above. But those were times when the Englishman felt that he must watch warily to prevent the pope from again gaining supremacy in his home country. It was just after the

scare of the "horrid" popish plot and Protestants were taking no chances. Their unjust suspicions had even fallen on the Lord Baltimore, and in 1691 the king, hearkening to the fears of the over-timid, had deprived his lordship of all public offices and functions. He was allowed, however, to keep the receipt of his rentals and all private emoluments, but full privileges were not restored to him until 1715. So when the desire for an establishment came to be expressed it was most natural that the Church of England should be the popular choice, for this church had by far the largest following, and the largest share of affection and loyalty of the people at large. But the action was not effected without a naturally strong and persevering opposition on the part of the Roman Catholics, Quakers, Puritans, Presbyterians and Lutherans, who in this contest were banded together.

The act of the assembly as finally passed provided that the Church of England should be established, and for its support there should be levied annually a tax of forty pounds of tobacco per poll upon all taxable inhabitants of the colony, this tax to be collected by the sheriff. The appointment of ministers to parishes was to be made by the governor, without appeal, induction being in his hands, and the minister was to keep a clerk and provide for him out of his own income. Only a minister could perform a marriage ceremony, where one was resident, his fee being five shillings sterling. The number of vestrymen was set at six as a minimum, two to be voted out at the annual meeting, but they could, if the parish desired, be immediately voted in again. The parish records show that some of the vestrymen were continuously in that office, through re-election, for ten, twenty, and even thirty years. By a subsequent law passed in 1730 the two longest in office were to be dropped and were not eligible again for three years. The minister was a member of the vestry. Persons refusing to be made wardens were to be fined one thou-

sand pounds of tobacco, the same to go to the king, most likely as a stronger assurance that the fine would be collected. No minister could hold more than two parishes, and he must have the consent of both. Dissenters were eligible to the office of vestrymen. This was declared by the governor and council in 1751, when Piscataway Parish refused to qualify one who had been elected. Churches were not erected by private subscription, but by levies on the taxables voted by the General Assembly.

Whether it was wise or proper to require this tax by law we are not to inquire, but on the part of those opposed to it it was restlessly submitted to and fiercely attacked whenever opportunity afforded. In the defence of their support the clergy waged an unceasing defensive war. The effect was bad upon themselves and embittered hostilities against them. The system concentrated their minds upon worldly interests and laid them open to the serious charge of seeking the fleece instead of the flock. Results were bound to be disastrous and Bishop Claggett and his contemporaries reaped undeservedly the crop of a hundred years of sowing.

One of the thirty parishes into which the province was divided in 1692 consisted of the lower portion of what is now Calvert County, and was given the name of Christ Church Parish. It was in this parish that Captain Thomas Clagett (as he appears to have spelled his name after coming to America) settled, and in which he was a member of the first appointed vestry. He was apparently well-to-do when he came to Maryland, as he at once purchased several large tracts of land in various parts of the province, such as "Goodlington Manor," one thousand acres on the eastern shore; "Weston," eight hundred acres on the western shore near Upper Marlboro; "Greenland," and "Croom," in Prince George's County, the latter of which we shall presently hear more of, as it eventually became the bishop's estate.

Thomas Clagett died in 1703, possessed of large landed estates in Maryland and of some property in England. His will was probated in 1706. He left a widow, four sons and two daughters. The fourth son, Richard, who inherited "Croom," was born about 1681 in Calvert County. About 1704 he married Deborah Dorsey, the widow of Charles Ridgley, of Baltimore County. Richard Clagett's name is frequently found as land commissioner for Prince George's County, and as either a purchaser or seller of land in various parts of the province. He died in 1752, when his grandson, Thomas John, was nine years old, and was buried at Croom. He left three sons and three daughters. One of the latter, Eleanor Clagett, married the Rev. Dr. John Eversfield, who was the tutor and theological instructor of the future bishop. The second child and eldest son, Edward Clagett, is the great-great-grandfather of Edwin Warfield, ex-governor of Maryland.

The Rev. Samuel Clagett, father of the bishop, was the second son of Richard, and was born about 1710 on his father's estate, "Croom." In 1740 he married Elizabeth Gantt, daughter of Edward Gantt, a Calvert County planter, and settled on an estate near Nottingham, close by "Croom." Their children were Priscilla and Thomas John. When in middle age, Samuel Clagett forsook his plantation life, studied theology, and in 1747 crossed to England to secure holy orders, being ordained a deacon in the Church of England by Richard Terrick, Lord Bishop of Peterborough, acting for the Bishop of London, and priest on the 20th of December, 1747. Returning to Maryland he served as rector successively of Christ Church Parish, Calvert County, and William and Mary Parish, Charles County. His wife died in 1750, when Thomas John was but seven years old, and a year or two later he married Anne Brown, daughter of Dr. Gustavus Brown, of Charles County. In August, 1756, the Rev.

Samuel Clagett died, in the very prime of life, after having been in the ministry but nine years. He is said to have been a man of considerable scholarly attainment, a worthy pastor and a highly respected citizen. Besides his daughter Priscilla and his son Thomas John, now left completely an orphan at thirteen years, he left a widow and an infant son, Samuel, who became a physician at Warrenton, Virginia, where he died in 1820, surviving his half-brother, the bishop, by about three and a half years. To Thomas John he left his estate called Croom, of 500 acres. His only daughter, Priscilla, became the second wife of Col. Samuel Chew, who lived at "Upper Bennett," in Calvert County. By this marriage there were two children, both sons, the eldest of whom, Col. John Hamilton Chew, born September 14th, 1771, married his first cousin, Priscilla Claggett, the eldest daughter of the bishop. Many descendants of this union are living today, most of whom still remain in Maryland.

After the death of his father Thomas John was placed under the guardianship of his mother's brother, Edward Gantt, of Calvert County, who in turn placed him under the instruction of the Rev. John Eversfield, the rector of St. Paul's, Prince George's County, and whose wife, as we have noted, was young Claggett's aunt on his father's side. Here he remained three years, at the end of which time he was sent to Lower Marlboro Academy. At that time and for thirty years previous, there was established in each of the Maryland counties, by act of the General Assembly, a grammar school, or academy, where a fair classical education might be obtained. The school for Calvert County was situated at Lower Marlboro and here Claggett received such a thorough training in Latin and Greek that their study remained a favorite pursuit throughout his long life.

Having received the necessary preparatory training, at the age of seventeen Claggett entered the College of New Jersey,

now Princeton University, where he was graduated with the degree of Bachelor of Arts on September 25th, 1764. Young men from all the American colonies were gathered in the New Jersey college at that time, and we know that Claggett made many lifelong friends. He had a most genial and amiable disposition, was always ready to pass a pleasant word, possessed a commanding intellect, and was tall, broad-shouldered and stalwart. In youth as well as in manhood he possessed a noble and unsullied character and dignity of mind which made him respected as well as admired. We know very little about his college days, however, not even the standard of scholarship which he attained, for Princeton village was for a time the storm center of the Revolution, and the college archives suffered sorely.

It is rather interesting, however, to recall some of the men whom Claggett must have known in his student days, for, as the college was then comparatively small, he must have been more or less intimately acquainted with all his fellow students. In the class of 1762, two years ahead of him, was Ebenezer Hazard, afterwards postmaster of New York, postmaster-general of the United States from 1782 to '89, and also remembered as the compiler of Hazard's *Historical Collections*. James Manning, also of the class of '62, became a prominent Baptist minister and the first president of Brown University. In the class of 1763 were William Paterson, governor of New Jersey, United States senator, and a justice of the United States supreme court; and Tapping Reeve, the most prominent teacher of law of his day in the country and who was chief justice of Connecticut at the time of his death. In the class of '65 were Jonathan Edwards, worthy son of a worthy sire, who himself was a theologian and metaphysician of no mean reputation; and David Ramsay, who made a name for himself in his adopted state of South Carolina, as a patriot in the Revolution, an exceptionally successful surgeon, and an

historian of some note. Three men worthy of mention in the class of 1766 whom Claggett must have known were Waightstill Avery, who became the first attorney-general of North Carolina; Oliver Ellsworth, of Connecticut, eminent as a patriot, statesman, United States senator, diplomatist, and chief justice of the United States; and Luther Martin, of Maryland, Burr's friend and defender, whom Jefferson called "the Federal bulldog," the jovial, rollicking, witty and audacious attorney-general of Maryland. Luther Martin was not a Marylander by birth, did not come to Maryland until after he left college, so we have no reason to believe that he and Claggett were intimate because of any state associations.

CHAPTER II

SOUTHERN MARYLAND IN COLONIAL DAYS

During the autumn of 1763, while on his way from Boston to Savannah, the Rev. George Whitefield, the great evangelist and inspirer of multitudes, made a brief stop at Princeton. Whitefield was then on his sixth, and next to his last, tour through America, and, although his physical health had been seriously impaired by excessive activity and open air preaching, he was undoubtedly then at the height of his intellectual attainments and magnetic abilities. Very naturally he preached to the students at the college, and, as he always did, made a remarkable impression, sixteen of them being converted during this visit. Among his hearers was young Claggett. We do not know what Claggett thought of Whitefield as a Churchman, nor of his peculiarities of public utterance, but as an inspirer to do and to be Whitefield certainly had a great and abiding influence over the young man. In after life the bishop "often endeavored to portray the striking and interesting scene presented by the impassioned orator, on the one hand pouring forth his mind in his burning words, and impressing his every passion and his every shade of feeling upon the mind of his audience; and on the other hand, a large assembly, consisting chiefly of careless youth, who had hardly ever before entertained a serious thought, wholly absorbed in the consideration of the important truths of religion, and swayed at pleasure by the irresistible control of a master spirit."[1]

Claggett probably had thoughts of entering the ministry

[1] Memoir of Bishop Claggett, by Rev. J. H. Chew, in *The Evergreen*, Jan. 1847, p. 1.

before he met Whitefield, and came under the influence of that remarkable personality, but doubtless this experience confirmed his earlier convictions. Also it is likely that the earnest teaching of the pious Dr. Finley, president of the college, had due weight in his deliberations concerning his life work. After graduating in 1764, when lacking a few days of being twenty-one years old, he returned immediately to Prince George's County and took up theological studies under the personal direction and supervision of his uncle, the Rev. Dr. John Eversfield. One finds many and divers opinions expressed by contemporaries concerning Dr. Eversfield as a clergyman and as a theologian, but few will deny that the doctor thoroughly enjoyed a good fox hunt. To attach to him, however, the odium that usually accompanies the phrase of "fox-hunting parson" would undoubtedly be unjust and undeserved, for, although the worthy man seems to have had a keen pleasure in a good mount and a pack of hounds, there is nothing to show that he abused this pastime, or that the love of it made him a less faithful pastor, or a less able theologian. He was a man of mark in his day, and one of the most widely known ministers of the gospel in the colonies.

Dr. Eversfield came to Maryland from England in 1728, a young Oxford graduate in priest's orders, and Benedict Leonard Calvert, the proprietary governor, presented him with the living of St. Paul's, Prince George's County, then a prominent parish. Here he remained rector for nearly fifty years. The present brick church, known as St. Thomas's, and originally intended as a chapel of ease to St. Paul's Parish, was erected under his supervision. Eversfield brought considerable money from England and invested extensively in land, being at his death one of the largest landowners in the county. He lived on one of his estates located in Nottingham District, about two miles from St. Thomas's Church, and called the estate "Eversfield's Map of Italy" on account of

its peculiar shape. He was known as a man of pronounced opinions, exceptional learning, great wealth, and wide influence, both in church and secular matters. Many volumes of his library, extensive for that period, are yet in existence. He was very methodical in his habits, and kept a minute record of his personal and domestic affairs in a large parchment bound volume, which is still in the possession of one of his descendants. This book contains memoranda of his genealogy, deeds of land, receipts, notes, bonds, letters, and items of every subject which interested him, and is considerable of a curiosity. He conducted a private school at his house, as did so many of the clergy in his day, for the twofold reason that they needed the additional compensation to supplement their meagre clerical stipends, and that frequently the parson was the only man available who possessed anything more than the rudiments of book-learning.

He was a most pronounced Tory, never hesitating to air his opinion on matters political as well as theological, and thereby giving offence to many of his fellow-citizens when trouble began to brew that led to the war for independence. At one time during the conflict he was so unwise in his speech that he was arrested, placed under guard, and his property was confiscated by the provincial government. But he was getting old, and besides was much respected in spite of his fiery tongue, so he was shortly released and had his property restored to him. He did not live to see the final victory of the cause which he had so vigorously disparaged. He died on the 8th of November, 1780, and his wife only survived him about a month. Both were buried under the altar of St. Thomas's Church, at Croom.

He was rector of the wealthiest and the most prominent parish in Maryland at that time, with possibly the exception of All Saints', Frederick County. As an illustration of the then luxurious manner in which their parish church was fur-

nished, it may be of some interest to give the following brief transcript from the Vestry Proceedings. At the vestry meeting on June 2d, 1752, at which Dr. Eversfield was present, we find recorded:

"The Vestry have this day agreed with M^{r} Samuel Roundell that he provide for the Church a Pulpit Cloth & Cushion of Crimson Velvet, the Glory in gold, with Gold fringe & Tassels y^{e} Cloth to be six feet in width & three feet two Inches deep the Cushion to be two feet & a half long. Also a handsome Marble Font a Crimson Velvet Carpet for y^{e} Communion Table Eight f^{t} & a half wide & four & a half feet deep. A Cloth for the Reading Desk of the same Velvet three feet four Inches wide and Eighteen Inches deep. The ten Commandments & the Belief & Lord's Prayer a hanging Dial the plate to be two feet Square and to be paid for y^{e} same next June in manner following that is to say Twenty P^{r} Cent to be added on the amount of the Cost & Charges the following Motto to be on the Dial Viz Sic transit Gloria Mundi. And if it should so happen that the money or any part thereof should not be paid him at y^{e} time afore mentioned then to pay him interest at y^{e} Rate of 6 P C^{t} till it is discharged."

At a vestry held on the 5th of March, 1754, nearly two years later, "M^{r} Samuel Roundell appears & acquaint the Vestry men present that the Several things for the Church agreeable to the Order formerly made he had received from London. At the same time produced the Bill of parcels for every particular which with the charges & advance amounts to One hundred & Forty pounds Nineteen Shillings Sterling Exclusive of the Charge for bringing them from the Mouth of Potuxent River." A couple of pages further on, in casting up an itemized account, the vestryman frankly records: "N. B. The Charges of bringing the Goods from the Mouth of Potuxent River to Nottingham at present I don't know."

We have given these particulars from the history and an-

tiquities of old St. Paul's, because this is the parish over which the good bishop was destined to preside for many peaceful years.

Claggett pursued his theological studies in a little two-room, two-story, red-and-blue brick building, erected on the lawn under the trees, entirely apart from the rectory. There was no vestibule, but on opening the door one stepped directly into the room, which was lighted by small, diamond-shaped window panes. The walls were wainscoted in oak, and in the center of the room, entirely free from the walls, a little spiral stairway, with its carved balustrade, ascended to the room above. This singular structure reminded one of a pulpit more than of anything else, and it is not at all unlikely that the youthful theologian preached down many a sermon to an imaginary congregation from the turn in the stairs. This quaint little building withstood the ravages of time for several generations and has only recently been destroyed.

In recognition of his continued study, Claggett received an M. A. degree from his Alma Mater the year following his graduation, and in three years' time he had completed his studies for holy orders. In the spring of 1767, therefore, he sailed for England for this purpose, and after a successful voyage, was admitted to the diaconate on September 20th, 1767, by the Rt. Rev. Richard Terrick, Lord Bishop of London, who, by virtue of his position as the head of the see of London, held ecclesiastical oversight of the North American colonies. On October 11th, following, he was ordained a priest in the Church of England by the same prelate. In those days a voyage to England from the colonies was a tedious and dangerous undertaking, for smallpox and other dread diseases lurked in the holds of ships, and made terrible ravages among slaves and gentlefolk alike. Because of all these obstacles and dangers, most of the young men who went from the colonies to secure episcopal ordination remained

there after receiving deacon's orders until the priesthood was also conferred upon them, and to make conditions as easy as possible for candidates from abroad, both ordinations were frequently conferred with but a short time intervening. To express it another way, a candidate did not generally go to England for deacon's orders until he was also prepared to take priest's orders.

From the diary of a young English clergyman, the Rev. Weeden Butler, who soon became Claggett's fast friend, we have this description of his ordination to deacon's orders:

"Sep. 20: 1767—Went with Messrs Manester, Sims, Foster, Wigan & Clarke, in a coach to the King's Arms, Fulham. Met & accompanied to the palace Mr. Clagett & Mr. Cramp. Put on bands & surplices & drank chocolate. About half past ten o'clock we were all called into Chapel; the Bishop, Mrs. Terrick, & all the family there. The amiable & very worthy Mr. Carr read the prayers with great solemnity. The lessons for the day were remarkably adapted to the occasion. Afterwards, in his surplice as before, Mr. Carr gave us an excellent discourse from I Kings 18: 21. He closed with recommending the duty of the ministry to our care & attention & with a prayer to God to bless us in the discharge thereof. Service over about half past twelve. Then came on the grandest of all grand, solemn and awful ordinances, the delivery of God's most holy commission to sinful erring man. We received ordination & the holy eucharist at the hands of the Bishop of London; he alone imposing hands at the former; and Mr. Carr assisting him at the latter. Bless, Lord, I most humbly implore thee; bless thou the work of their sacred hands upon us; O, prosper thou their ministrations to our bodies, by the application & sanctifying grace of thy spirit to our souls; that we may be indeed thy faithful Διακονοὶ, & the servants of thy servants, O Sovereign of life & love. Service over about one. The family received the communion after the deacons

whose names I subjoin with much pleasure, & the sincerest wishes for their success, & removal in God's own time to a higher & still more honorable degree.

1. The friendly, open, frank, engaging Mr. Clagett, a native of Maryland, educated in a college of the Jerseys, & in a few weeks to sail for & reside on a cure in Maryland.

2. Mr. John Cramp, my old acquaintance by sight & near countryman, successful after some disappointment on former application for orders, to be ordained priest tomorrow, in order to his sailing for North Carolina where a cure is provided for him."[1]

[The others are all English.]

Mr. Claggett did not sail for home immediately after his ordination, but remained two or three months to study in the English libraries, and to visit family connections. In after years he delighted to tell of his hospitable reception by these English cousins, and of the pleasant weeks spent with them in the mother country. Early in the spring of 1768 he returned to Maryland, never to see England again. We do not know just when he arrived, but on March 19th, 1768, Governor Sharpe, of Maryland, gave him a licence to officiate in St. Anne's Church, Annapolis. He also found upon his return that Bishop Terrick, without solicitation, had recommended him to the kind offices of the governor of Virginia, but he preferred to remain in his native Maryland.

We find from the records of Somerset Parish, Somerset County, that in June of that year he performed the marriage ceremony of his cousin, Doctor Edward Gantt. The following letter written by Gantt some years previously is rather interesting in its glimpse of eighteenth century life, though its assertion does not accord well with the writer's early launching into the career of a benedict.

[1] Nichols' *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 5, p. 850.

EDWARD GANTT TO BASIL WARING.

London *September* 29th 1764.

Dear Sir,

. . . You must excuse my not writing to you by Mr. Carroll, for really I hardly had Time to scribble a few Lines to my Father. But when Opportunity serves you will always hear from me. Your Seal I have not got done, but I shall try to send it by Mr. Russell's Ship, the Jane, which will be in Maryland sometime this Winter. I can't say London answers my Expectations. But it is generally the Case with this as with most other Things. When our Expectations are much raised by the Description of any Thing, we too often find ourselves disappointed. I shall set out for Edinburgh tomorrow or the next Day; there to spend three or four Years, after which I shall return to Maryland to finish my Days, provided I do not make my Exit before that Time. Maryland I find is the Place that best pleases me. You need not engage any of the Girls to wait for me, as I am pretty well convinced I shall die an old Batchelor. Money I never will marry for, and one without Money I think won't suit my Circumstances, therefore I find it bids fair for a single life. Miss no opportunity of writing as Mr. Russell can send them every week to Scotland. I am

Your Sincere Friend,

Edw^{D}. Gantt, Jun^{R}.

When Claggett began his ministry the number of parishes in Maryland had increased from thirty, the number in 1692, to forty-four. There were in these forty-four parishes eighty-three places of worship. Each parish had its rector, or incumbent, and some few of the clergy possessed curates, or assistants. At this time there were about fifty clergymen in the province, and, as a rule, they were comfortably supported financially. The population had increased very con-

siderably. From 25,000 in 1692, it had advanced to well nigh 200,000, but of this number, 45,000 were negro slaves. Dissent was probably no greater in proportion than when the Church was established. Thus we see that the increase in parishes had not kept pace with the increase in population. We are led to believe, however, that there were too many parishes originally organized, notwithstanding their inconveniently large size, and that conditions in Claggett's time did not call for more parishes.

The following letter was written by Claggett to his friend, the Rev. Weeden Butler, soon after his return to Maryland.

TO THE REV. WEEDEN BUTLER.[1]

PATUXENT, MARYLAND, *July* 1, 1768.

DEAR SIR,

I embrace the earliest opportunity to inform you of my safe arrival here amongst my friends, & also to let you see that neither time nor space are able in the least to obliterate from my mind the memory of our friendship. I have sometimes thought it not a little strange that you, in so short a time, should get such possession of my heart; but there is an unknown something in the very countenance of some men that enfuses love and esteem into the beholders; we do but see & we feel the growing flame. Thus, sir, I suppose my affections became prejudiced in your favor, & when I found that our religious sentiments were so nearly alike, this discovery laid a foundation for mutual affection which will never be eradicated, no, not by eternity itself! for such a passion, I hope, is not incompatible with the joys of heaven. I intend, sir, to let you hear from me once every year, that is by the sailing of our tobacco ships, & hope you will write in the spring by

[1] This and the two following letters are from Nichols' *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. 5, p. 853-59.

their return. Mr. Molleson, in Golden-square, Crutched Friars, will always forward your letters.

I have not yet got a parish, but have obtained the Governor's promise (in whose gift they are) that I shall be preferred as soon as a good vacancy falls. However, I am not entirely unprovided for even now, as I have a curacy of £100[1] a year, which, with a farm that brings me in about £150 more, is a tolerable maintenance in this country, where everything but labor is much cheaper than with you. Our great men's promises here in church affairs are yet not quite so short as they are in England; the reason is because there are not so many church cormorants, pluralities not being tolerated here. We have about fifty parishes in this province, few or none under three hundred pounds sterling, & from that to seven or eight. I really would advise you, if you do not meet with that encouragement which I am sure your merit deserves, to take a trip over, you might easily get a recommendation from Lord Baltimore to our governor. I am interested in this advice, I own, but notwithstanding that, it is really better than staying where you are, without Dr. Dodd rises in the church, or you have expectations from some other quarter. Merit in your country has long since (I am sorry to say it) lost its sterling value; moreover, if you should ever entertain any thoughts of coming here, let me know it, & I would advise you what steps to take previous thereto. I am very anxious to see an able & good ministry in this province, too many of my brethren at present being a shocking set (to say no worse of them) having neither abilities, a sense of the importance of their duty, nor (what is worse than all,) an inclination to perform it. "Alas for such shepherds!" as Dr. Dodd says on the parable of the good Samaritan. Those are excellent books[2] & I am much obliged for your recom-

[1] $266 in modern currency.
[2] Dr. Dodd's *Sermons*, 4v.

mendation of them. I endeavor to model my discourses on the same plan, & I hope they will be attended with some good, as I seem to have more attentive hearers & fuller congregations than any other that I know of here. The people are struck with a preacher who delivers his discourses out of the old drawling way. If Dr. Dodd publishes anything further, please to let me know of it, as I am determined to get all of his works. He appears to me to be the best speaker & the soundest divine I know in the church & you have a great happiness in being so intimately connected with him. Should there be anything else published in our way agreeable to your principles I shall be obliged to you to let me hear of it, & should there be anything of curiosity to you here in the natural world that you should like to see, or any other way in which I could serve you, I shall always be glad to do it. You see I have set down my thoughts to you just as they run, which freedom I know you will excuse, as I am, dear Brother, with Sincerity,

Your friend,

Thos Jno Claggett.

TO THE SAME.

Calvert County, Maryland, *Sep.* 1, 1769.

Dear Sir,

I received yours by Mr. ———; though I have not as yet seen that gentleman. I am apprehensive he deceived you with respect to my referring him to your acquaintance, for I do not remember that I have seen him these three or four years. I have sent to him repeatedly for the books you were so kind as to remit me by him; but the last answer I had from him was, that he had no such books. I am sorry to inform you that this behavior is entirely consonant to his general character; & it is much to be lamented that such men cannot be prevented from entering the ministery. We labor under peculiar disadvantages in this respect in this province; some

of the livings here are large, the incumbents (some of them) seem to be desirous to get clear of doing their duties, & therefore recommend such men for orders. Mr. ——— has been repeatedly trying, for some years past, to obtain a recommendation, but could never carry his point until he happened to meet with one of the gentlemen I have been describing, whose curate he now is. To prevent any like deceptions for the future, I shall never recommend anyone to your acquaintance otherwise than by letter. This occurrence may serve to give you some idea of the behavior of the clergy of this province. It is a lamentable case! Too many of them when they get inducted, seem to act as if they thought themselves unaccountable for any of their conduct. The northern provinces contain mostly Presbyterians, who now flock to England for orders, & the Church of England is full of them. These and many other reasons call loudly for a Bishop on this side of the Atlantic. Our papers tell us that the affair is much aggitated at home and I sincerely wish that it may be carried. And if it should please God to place Dr. Dodd in this exalted station, how happy should I be! how happy would America be! I know Dr. Dodd has an interest at Court, & I heartily wish he would endeavor to be appointed for America, for he appears to me to be just such a man as we want; & I really think there is no station in which he would be more useful; but, however I may please myself with this reflection, God knows what is best for us & I shall endeavor cheerfully to acquiesce in his dispensations. When I sat down I intended only to write a few lines, to let you know that I should answer your very kind letter by Mr. Hobson, a gentleman of my acquaintance, who leaves this place in about twelve weeks, but the mention of Mr. ——— has led me from my purpose a little; I shall therefore only add that, on Gov. Eden's arrival, a petition was preferred to him in my behalf by the parishioners of All Saints parish, & his excellency was pleased to

grant me an induction into the benefice. Here I believe I shall remain for life, & oh! that your & my prayers for my success with poor dying sinners may in some measure be answered! I fully intend, by the divine grace, to make it the business of my life to exhort, persuade, & advise them; you know that is all we can do, the success comes from God. Oh! how happy shall we be, my dear friend, if each of us, after having endeavored earnestly to recommend the Lord Jesus to dying sinners, may meet at last in the place of blessedness, where we shall never more be separated! Your letter almost deprives me of any hopes of ever seeing you again in this world; however that may be, depend upon it I shall ever remain Your sincere friend,

THOS JNO CLAGGETT.

P. S. I have sent you by Captain Bishop four hams; he has promised to land them as his own, & so they will be clear of the duty. I have ordered them to be good, & if you think them so, please let me know it in your next. I am sorry our country affords so little that is worthy of your acceptance; but should there be anything here that you have the least curiosity to obtain, be kind enough to let me know it, for I shall always take a peculiar pleasure in getting it for you.

TO THE SAME.

Sept. 19, 1769.

DEAR SIR,

In my last to you by Captain Bishop I mentioned that I should take the liberty to recommend to your acquaintance Mr. Hobson. This I expect will be delivered to you by that gentleman, & hope you will find him an agreeable acquaintance. Mr. Hobson tarries for some time in London, & I shall make use of him as a vehicle for my letters when I write to you.

I am now, Sir, settled for life, I believe; & desire nothing more in this world than to see Dr. Dodd Bishop of America, & you his chaplain, for I despair of ever seeing you otherwise. Religion here, my dear sir, is at a very low ebb; here is a large vineyard, with few, very few, honest & sincere laborers. The common topic from our pulpit is morality & they have almost preached it out of countenance. The fall of man, the free grace of God through Jesus Christ & the new birth are topics cautiously avoided by them; judge, therefore, of our state. The Presbyterian religion gains ground, & seems to flourish; & most probably the whole continent will be presbyterianized if we do not obtain an able & faithful bishop from our mother country. I am sorry to hear the uneasiness & destructions that seem to threaten the state on your side the water; we, too, have shared in these troubles, the late acts of Parliament imposing internal duties on us for raising a revenue, have occasioned much disturbance. The people throughout the continent have entered into an agreement not to take off any European luxuries. We have a fine country, capable of producing every necessity of life in great abundance. Upon the whole I do not believe the acts of Parliament have hurt us, for it is really amazing what great improvements have been made since the acts took place in almost every branch of handicraft business. I heartily wish that the mother country & her colonies may be restored to their former state of affection & duty. Please offer my best wishes to Dr. Dodd; & accept, my dear sir, of the hearty wishes, & sincere prayers of your friend & brother,

THO^{S} JN^{O} CLAGGETT.

CHAPTER III

EXPERIENCES IN COUNTRY PARISHES

On the 16th of March, 1769, the former rector having died, Claggett was appointed by Horatio Sharpe, governor of Maryland, curate in All Saints' Parish, Calvert County, and on the 7th of July, following, he was inducted rector of the parish by Governor Eden, as we have seen in his letter to Mr. Butler. This was the upper parish of Calvert County, and it extended from the Anne Arundel County line on the north, southward for about fifteen miles to Hunting Creek, and from the Chesapeake Bay westward to the Patuxent River, being about ten miles in breadth.

The fact that he was presented to his parish by the governor of the colony may serve to remind us that the vestries in Maryland, acting in behalf of the parishioners, had not then, as now, the power of appointing their own rectors. This power had from the beginning of Lord Baltimore's government been lodged in his hands by the charter, and he had been accustomed to exercise it through his governors, or lieutenants, they acting in his name.

Claggett entered upon the charge of All Saints' Parish with conditions very much in his favor. He was well and favorably known in the locality, he had many relatives and warm friends who were willing to aid him and anxious to see the young man succeed, and he was thoroughly acquainted with the needs of his parish. There was very little dissent in the community. The ground was well nigh all his own. Years before there had been some little Puritan element, but these adherents had mostly either come into the church, or else had become Quakers, of whom there were a few in the north-

east part of the parish. Roman Catholics there were practically none, and the same is true to-day, for with the exception of a small chapel at Solomon's Island, at the southern tip of the county, there is now no Roman Catholic place of worship in the whole of Calvert County.

In Claggett's letter to his friend, the Rev. Weeden Butler, we saw his opinion of the morals and manners of the Church of England clergymen. This version of the state of affairs was probably only too true. An anonymous writer in 1769 says: "That the Clergy of Maryland are better provided for than the Clergy of any other Colony, and that they are less respectable, is not to be controverted; being subject even to less restraint than other men, they, in the same proportion, are less guarded in their morals. I speak of their general character, for there are some of the sacred order who are men of worth and merit."[1]

There were probably many faithful members among the clergy in spite of such unsavory reports; for it is always the case that one riotous individual gets himself more prominently in the public eye than fifty sober and quietly disposed persons. In 1768, however, there were such flagrant examples of ministerial immorality abroad and exercising the priestly office that even the legislature determined some steps must be taken to prevent scandals in the Church and the gossip that these matters caused among her denominational contemporaries. The measures proposed are shown in the following letter from Claggett to the Bishop of London. This letter also shows that Claggett, though young in the ministry and in years, being but twenty-six years old and but two years in sacred orders, was interested practically in public affairs and in questions of the day.

[1] Perry, *Historical Collections: Maryland*, p. 339.

TO THE BISHOP OF LONDON.[1]

MARYLAND, *Sept.* 20th, 1769.

MY LORD:

Since my arrival in this Province I have observed with some concern that, in a late Session of Assembly, a Bill was brought into the house for the better regulating the lives and manners of the Clergy. By this Bill it was ordered that an Ecclesiastical Court should be established & that there should be Judges appointed, three of which were to be laymen. The Bill passed both houses of Assembly. But Governor Sharpe would not give his consent to it, supposing (as we think) that such a Bill was contrary to the established Rules of the Church of England.

It is now said that the advocates for the Bill will bring it in again next Session, in hopes that our new Governor will be more favorable to their scheme. Many of the Clergy here view it in a light derogatory to your Lordship's authorities in the Province, and tho' fully sensible that some such regulation is much wanted, yet they think it ought to proceed from and be directed by your Lordship. I doubt not but if this or any other Law should be enacted which the Clergy look upon as grievous, that a proper remonstrance will be made to your Lordship by them, tho' they are now, by a positive instruction of the Lord Baltimore to Governor Eden, forbid assembling themselves together on any occasion whatever, a privilege they have hitherto enjoyed. Your Lordship's known care and zeal for the established religion have emboldened me to make the foregoing remarks; & if on any future occasion I can be of the least service to your Lordship here, it will always contribute to the happyness of, my Lord,

Your Lordship's &c.,

THOS JNO CLAGGETT.

[1] *Ibid*, p. 340-1.

On the same date, the Rev. Hugh Neill, rector of St. Paul's Parish, Queen Anne's County, wrote on the same subject and in a similar strain to the Bishop of London. Although feeling that clerical reform was urgently needed, Churchmen wished it to emanate from the Church and not from the civil authorities.

"I need not take up your Lordship's time," writes Mr. Neill, "in pointing out the evil tendency that such a law (if it was passed) would have upon the Church in this provence, as it would be establishing Presbyterianism in this Colony upon the neck of the Church, and an effectual bar to the introduction of Episcopacy, which is generally wished for by the Clergy of this Provence."

Governor Sharpe did not sign the bill, which he possibly saw was an encroachment upon the rights of the established Church. Thus, between the inability of the Church to correct her evils and the Church's determination that the state should not, very little was accomplished toward reform.

Claggett remained in All Saints' Parish until the outbreak of the Revolution, the much-loved pastor of a faithful and much-loved flock. When he went to All Saints' he found there an old wooden church edifice, very much in ruins, and much too small for the accommodation of the parishioners. In the early part of 1775 he had the pleasure of seeing a new church finished and occupied. This edifice still stands. In its earlier days it was remarkable for the height of the enclosures to the pews, for they were so high that persons sitting in them could not see those sitting in adjoining ones, and its pulpit was high in proportion. Now all is changed and modernized; the old chancel, pulpit, reading desk, clerk's pew, galleries, all are gone.

In the fall of 1775 Claggett married Mary Gantt, his first cousin, daughter of Edward Gantt, of Calvert County, his mother's brother. This proved a most happy and, to the

bishop, a lifelong union, as his wife survived him by several years. Six children were born to them: Thomas John, who became a physician; Samuel, an attorney; Mary, who married John Eversfield of Matthew; Charles Nicholas, who died in Baltimore in 1832; Elizabeth Laura, who married Josiah Young; and Priscilla Elizabeth, who married her first cousin, Colonel John Hamilton Chew, of Calvert County. Of the first and the last a large number of descendants are living. The other two sons died single, and the other daughters without children. Claggett's place of residence while in All Saints' Parish was in the town of Lower Marlboro, on the Patuxent River, a few miles west from his church.

Into the happiness of early married life and pleasant parochial relations the war cloud of the Revolution rudely broke. Claggett attempted for a time to discharge unaltered the duties of his office, but after the Declaration of Independence he was compelled to choose whether he would break his ordination vows, or whether he would temporarily go into retirement and await the outcome of the struggle. There is no doubt that he had great sympathy with the cause of his countrymen, and had he not been bound by oaths which he felt most sacred, he very likely might have espoused openly the cause of freedom. That he was not a moral coward is plain from the respect he continued to receive from his parishioners, among whom were very few Tories. His own family and that of his wife's were Whigs. It is most evident that his people understood and respected his delicate position. White and Provoost saw their way clear to approve and aid the revolutionary cause; Bass and Parker remained in charge of their parishes, and clear in conscience, by omitting, at their vestries' request, prayers for the king and the royal family, retaining unchanged the remainder of the liturgy; Seabury and Claggett, no less true to the dictates of conscience, could not forget the fact that in their solemn ordination they had

sworn allegiance to the king and loyalty to the British government. Writing in after years Claggett referred to the Revolution as "a glorious cause", and we can not but feel that he was very truly in sympathy with his brethren, though his sacred calling compelled him to be neutral.

In 1776, just before the Declaration of Independence, there were forty-four parishes in Maryland, each having its rector, and some a curate. On the establishment of the state government, the Bill of Rights deprived the clergy of their legal support, which they had enjoyed for three generations, and a period of very indifferent support followed.[1] Besides depriving them of their support, an oath was soon after required, which none of them felt they could take without violation of their ordination vows. Under these restrictions nine of the Maryland clergy gave up their charges and went to England, six went to Virginia, one to Pennsylvania, one to Delaware, one to private life in Elkton, one to his estate in Charles County, one to his estate in Prince George's County, two to estates elsewhere, and two or three to teaching. We are not surprised that hard times followed for religion.

In consequence of the war Claggett resigned his parish late in 1776, and retired to his estate of Croom, where he remained in retirement for two years. For the next two years he officiated in his home parish of St. Paul's, Prince George's County, and was elected its rector on the 7th of August, 1780. Here he remained until 1786, with the exception of a short period, about 1781, as rector of Christ Church, Queen Caroline Parish, Anne Arundel County. Of this short rectorate very little is known. In 1786 he took charge of the historic old parish of St. James, Anne Arundel County, and

[1] It is said that when Dr. William Smith went to Chestertown, on the Eastern Shore, in 1780, and was offered the rectorship of Chester Parish, that, as a compensation, he was offered no money, but 600 bushels of wheat, and it took 122 persons to agree to contribute before this amount could be promised. See Smith, *Life of Wm. Smith*, v. 2, p. 34.

also of his former cure, All Saints', Calvert County, which charges he held until his election to the episcopate. After that event he returned to Croom, and became, in addition to his episcopal duties, again rector of St. Paul's, Prince George's County. In 1808, failing health compelling him to resign this large parish, he organized the little church at Upper Marlboro, near his home, to which was given the name of Trinity Church, and of which he continued to be the rector the rest of his life. In his later years he twice had an assistant, but at the time of his death he had none.

St. James' Parish was laid out in 1694, in accordance with the act of assembly of 1692, by which the province of Maryland was divided into thirty parishes. There had been a church in this locality for a decade or more previous to that date, known as Herring Creek Parish church, and St. James' from that day to this has been known as Herring Creek almost as much as by its legal name, so long does it take to break a once fastened habit. We do not know when the original church was built, but we know that in 1695 it was old enough to need repairs, 800 pounds of tobacco being provided to defray the expenses. In the same year a contract was awarded for a new church. Why they gave up the old we do not know. Dr. Gambrall suggests[1] that perhaps it was not near enough to the center of the parish, or not large enough. The new church was small and possessed little architectural merit (as few of the colonial churches did in the country districts), but it was substantially built and large enough to accommodate 150 worshippers, even though they were seated on the square pew arrangement. As the old church was still standing the people took their time in erecting the new; hence the work was undoubtedly better done than in some of the other districts where no previous edifice had existed. Although the interior was severely plain,

[1] *Church Life in Colonial Maryland*, p. 68.

according to our standards, it acquired many tasteful embellishments from time to time through the following century, which churches in less favored communities did not secure. Thus at a vestry meeting on the 8th of August, 1791, the rector, Dr. Claggett, reported, according to the vestry proceedings, "that the Vestry of All Saints Parish Calvert County had three Yards of Purple Broad Cloth for sail which he thought would Suit for a Communion Cloth and Hangings for the Pulpit in this Parish Church and that the Price of the same was One Guinea P Yard. The Vestry Directed the Doct[r] To Purchase the same and Deliver him the Money for that Purpose."

Dr. Claggett (for he became a Doctor of Divinity by vote of his Alma Mater, Princeton College in 1787[1]) became rector of St. James' Parish in 1786 and continued as such until his election to the episcopate in 1792. From a vestry meeting of July 25th, 1786, we copy the following: "At a Vestry met and held in the Vestry Room of the said Parish by the Vestrymen thereunto legally authorized and appointed on the day and year above written, present: Col. John Weems, John Hall, Ezekiel Gott, Richard Harrison, Benjamin Burgess, Cap[t] William Weems, and Zachariah Childs, Church Warden—The Reverend Doct[r] Thomas John Clagett appears and agrees to Officiate in the aforesaid Parish Church every other Sabbath, and to perform all the accustomed duties of the said parish for three years unless prevented by sickness or any other unforeseen Casualty." Claggett was also, as we have seen on a preceding page, rector at this time of All Saints' Parish, Calvert County. For these services the vestry bargained to give him the free use and enjoyment of all and every glebe and their appurtenances, the exclusive right to the pulpit in the parish church, and all other privileges and advantages which the minister of the parish ought to enjoy.

[1] He also received the degree of D. D. from Washington College in 1792.

This agreement was to be in force for the three years beginning the 1st of August, 1786. In the parish records Claggett's own signature is appended to this agreement.

The first mention of Claggett in the parish vestry proceedings is in the record of the vestry meeting of "Saint Jamses" on Sunday, the 2nd of July, 1786, when it was "Order'd That the Register Write to the Rev'd Doct^r Thomas Cleget to inform him that the Vestry have made up the Sallery Requested and Desire he will attend the church on Sunday the Ninth of this Inst." This entry seems to imply some previous action but none can be found in the proceedings of the vestry. His predecessor was the Rev. Walter Magowan, a native of Ireland, who was ordained in 1768, and became the incumbent of St. James' the following year, where he remained until his death in 1786.

In the diocesan convention which met in Baltimore-Town May 27-29, 1788, it was moved on the last day just before final adjournment, by James Tilghman, lay delegate from Chester Parish, Kent County, "that the several Vestries be requested to transmit to the next Convention an account of the Glebe lands (if any) or other property belonging to the respective parishes, with the quantity and condition of the same, and the annual amount of the rents." In compliance with this motion, which was carried, the vestry of St. James' furnished the following statement, which is spread on the parish records, and which gives one a very fair idea of the state of that parish during Dr. Claggett's rectorate.

"The Vestry taking the Same into Consideration Beg Leave to Report to the Convention that there is One Glebe Adjoining to the Town of Pigg-point Containing about Six hundred Acres of Land a Donation to the Parish by Nicholas Terret Esq^r of the Annual Value of About four Thousand Pounds of Merchantable Tobacco, or Sixty Pounds hard money and One Other Glebe adjoining the Church a Donation thereto

by Nathan Rigby Containing One Hundred Acres of Land with a Dwelling House on it of the Annual Value of Two Thousand Pounds of Crop Tobacco or Thirty Pounds Current Money, a Brick Church in good Repair and a grave Yard much out of repair. We have also a Parish Library many of the Books Distributed about the Parish and Likely to be lost.[1] A Sufficient Quality of Good Church Plate Consisting of One Gallon Silver Flaggon in good Order One Quart Challace One Large Silver Oval Dish and One Three Pint Silver Basin for the font all in good Order." At a meeting of the vestry September 7th, 1789, it was "Order'd that the Regest[r] Advertise for all Persons who have any Books Belonging to the Vestry of St. James' Parish to Bring them in to the Vestry of S[d] Parish without delay."

At a vestry meeting held on the 6th of February, 1790, we read:

"The Rev[d] M[r] Clegett appear'd and agreed to serve the Parish for one year Commencing the first Day of August last for the sum of One Hundred and Fifty Pounds Current money he the said Clegett having the Previledge of Imploying some Minister of the Protestine (*sic*) Episcopal Church to be approved of By this Vestry to Officiate in this Church Every other Sunday as soon as such minister Can Be had but in as much as the said Sum is not yet Subscribed the said Clegett agrees to take the Subscription that is already made up as a Compensation for his this years Services and the Vestry Promise to use their Indeavors to Increase it for him to the amount above mentioned if in their Power—on these Terms the Vestry nominate and appoint him the said Clegett D. D. Rector of this Parish for this year ending the first day of August next and give him all Priveleges Immunities and advantages Express'd in a former agreement on the Records.

[1] For a catalog of these books, which was entered in the parish vestry proceedings, see, Gambrall, *Church Life in Colonial Maryland*, pp. 104–111.

"Provided that the several Gentilmen who have taken subscriptions Deliver them to the Rev^{d} Tho^{s} John Clagett and that the Regester Assign them to him. The Vestry request the Rector to imploy M^{r} McPherson to read Devine Service and a Homily or Sermon to the Peopple every other Sunday until some Ordained Minister can Be Obtained."

This is a fair example of the quaint form of contract by which the Maryland vestries engaged their rectors from time to time. The more picturesque than satisfactory manner in which the rector was sometimes paid is shown in the following extract from the parish records.

Maryland St Jamses Parish
Novb^{r} 15th 1779

Whereas no act has hitherto been made for the Support of the Clergy of the Church of England by the Legislature of this State we the Subscribers do therefore bind and Oblidge Ourselves our Heirs Executors or Administrators to Pay unto the Vestry of the Afs^{d} Parish or their Order the Sum of Money or Quantity of Tobacco Wheat Corn Rye Oats Peas or Beans Annexed to our Respective Names on or before the first Day of Decb^{r}, 1780 to be applied by S^{d} Vestry towards Imploying a Clergyman to officiate in S^{d} Parish for one year from the Date hereof and to Defray other necessary Expences of Said Parish.

(Subscribed to by 68 names.)

A list of communicants at the parish church on Easter Sunday, April 4, 1790, is given in the book of vestry proceedings. There are 48 whites and 13 negroes, total 61. Of the 48 whites 11 are males and 37 are females. So it would seem that the lament of our bishops and other clergy regarding the unequal proportion of the sexes on the parish register and confirmation rolls may have been sounded also by some of their worthy predecessors. The list of "Black Brethren

Communicants" include "George" and "Rhemus" "servants to Thos J. Claggett." The attitude of this parish towards the colored people is further shown in the following extract from the vestry proceedings of February 7th, 1791.

"On application of Robert a Black man servant to Mr. John Thomas on behalf of himself and the rest of the Black Communicants in this Parish for a Piece of Ground on the Church Glebe adjoining the North East Corner of the Church Yard no more than Sixty feet Square for a Burying Ground for the said Blacks and their Descendants—Resolved that the said Ground be Appropriated to that Purpose Provided they Rail it in at their Own Cost and Charges as they Purpose."

The following letter not only reminds us that Claggett lived in a slaveholding community but that he himself was probably a slaveholder.

THE REV. JOSEPH JACKSON TO BISHOP CLAGGETT

Westphalia, Thursday Night, 7th *Jan'y* '96.

Right Revd & Dear Sir,

Major John Burgess has acquainted me, that through Mr. Bradley Baynes, he some little Time ago had some Proposal from you respecting Mrs. M. Burgess's Negro Fellow Ned. At least had learned that you had some Thoughts of purchasing him. He, as well as Mrs. B. have requested me to write to you upon the Subject.

I remember to have mentioned the fellow to you incidentally once before. What I might then say, added to what you will have learned from others respecting him, may leave it unnecessary now to give you his Character. I think this but due, however, to the Opinion I have entertained of him, since he became known to me: that I observe him to have borne the Character of an honest, industrious, good-tempered Slave, & that he has ever appeared such to me. His age is not certainly known, but if it exceeds 30 (Mrs. B. says it exceeds not 25

or 26) at all, 'tis believed not to be by more than one year or two.

The principal Reason of my writing is, that we might become apprized whether the Terms at which he is offered meet your Approbation. The Major told me today, that the Terms were, for this Man and a son of his about 5 or 6 years of age, £125, upon a 6 Month's Credit; or £120 ready Money. Should the boy be parted from his Father (which it is desired he should not be), a Deduction of about £25 will be made upon his Account. Should you, though, be inclined to purchase the Man, & to have him by himself, I can venture to say, that you might obtain him with that Deduction, i.e. at £100 upon Credit, or at £95 for ready Money. And, might I add my Opinion, it should be that, as Slaves are now commonly sold, he would be very cheap. Your Determination will be expected by the return of the Bearer.

Your obliged & obed^{t} Serv^{t}

Joseph Jackson.

CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZATION OF THE MARYLAND CHURCH

On the 9th of November, 1780, the first convention of the Maryland clergy and laity was held at Chestertown, on the Eastern Shore. There were only three clergymen present. In a letter of May 10, 1810, the Rev. James Jones Wilmer, then chaplain in the United States Senate, wrote to Bishop Claggett, "I am one of the three who first organized the Episcopal Church during the Revolution, and am consequently one of the primary aids to its consolidation throughout the United States. The Rev. Dr. Smith, Dr. Keene and myself held the *first* convention at Chestertown, and I acted as secretary." In this convention of 1780, besides the three clergymen, there were 24 lay delegates, representing five parishes, all on the Eastern Shore.

The country was still in the throes of war, and activities were largely paralyzed. Since the opening of hostilities the population of Maryland had decreased greatly. Money was exceedingly scarce, only £200,000 being estimated in circulation in the state; many of her prominent men were in the field, a number had lost their lives in the contest, and several had fled to England or to Canada rather than take arms against their king.

Soon after the close of the Revolution, in 1783, the legislature of Maryland took up the subject of organizing the Episcopal Church, and particularly of appointing ordainers to the ministry, although the state legislature was composed of men of many different religious denominations. This scheme very naturally received the opposition of all level-headed and farseeing Churchmen, their spokesman and most

valiant worker in the cause being the Rev. Samuel Keene, who, by personal efforts before the legislature, persuaded that body to abandon the project. However much in need of organization they might be they did not wish the work done by the state legislature, for Churchmen clearly saw that if these plans were adopted soon there would be no *Episcopal* Church.

The subject of religion was next brought to the state assembly by Gov. William Paca, at the session of May, 1783. Advocating perfect impartiality to all Christian denominations he begged the legislature to consider the matter of the support of the Christian ministry.

"It is far from our Intention," he writes, "to embarrass your Deliberations with a variety of Objects, but we cannot pass over Matters of so high concernment as Religion and Learning. The sufferings of the *Ministers* of the Gospel of all *Denominations,* during the War, have been very considerable; and the Perseverance and Firmness of those, who discharged their sacred Functions under many discouraging Circumstances, claim our Acknowledgments and Thanks. The Bill of Rights and Form of Government recognize the Principle of *Public Support for the Ministers* of the Gospel, and ascertain the mode. Anxiously solicitous for the Blessings of Government, and the Welfare and Happiness of our Citizens, and thoroughly convinced of the powerful Influence of Religion, when diffused by its respectable Teachers, we beg leave most seriously and warmly to recommend, among the first objects of your attention, *on the Return of Peace,* the making such Provision, as the Constitution, in this Case, authorizes and approves."[1]

About a week after this address was made public, May 12-15, a considerable number of the Episcopal clergy chanced to be met together at the first annual commencement of Wash-

[1] *Address to the Members,* etc., Balt., 1784.

ington College, in Chestertown. They seized this opportunity to hold a convention, in which they heartily agreed that, inasmuch as the governor of the state was thus working for the interests of religion, they ought, as soon as possible, to hold a council, or convention, and consider the revision or readjusting of the liturgy to suit local circumstances and changed political conditions, the means for organizing the Church in their state, and how a succession of the ministry might be maintained. Accordingly, they adjourned to meet at Annapolis, Wednesday, August 13th, of the same year (1783). At this convention a committee was appointed "to prepare the Draft of an Act or Charter of Incorporation, to enable the Episcopal Church of this State, as a Body Corporate, to hold Goods, Lands and Chattels, by Deed, Gift, Devise, &c., to the amount of * * * per annum, as a Fund for providing small Annuities to the Widows of Clergymen, and for the Education of their Children, or any poor Children in general, who may be found of promising Genius and Disposition, for a Supply of Ministers in the said Church, and for other pious and charitable Uses."

This committee, which seems to have constituted the ecclesiastical authority of the diocese of Maryland, was composed of three clergymen from each shore who were appointed "to examine such young Gentlemen as may offer themselves Candidates for Holy Orders in our Church . . . and to recommend such Candidates as may be thought worthy to serve as Readers in any Parishes that may think proper to employ them." This arrangement was to hold "until a regular Ordination of Clergy could be Obtained." This clerical committee consisted of William Smith, John Gordon and Samuel Keene, for the Eastern Shore, and William West, Thomas John Claggett and Thomas Gates, for the Western Shore.

At this convention the clergy, feeling it necessary to devise some means for the succession of the Ministry, drew up that

document so well known in the history of the Church, called "the Bill of Rights," or "the Declaration of Certain Fundamental Rights & Liberties." In this instrument, too familiar to need reprinting in full here,[1] the clergy expressed their belief "that there be these three Orders of Ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests and Deacons, and that an Episcopal Ordination and Commission are necessary to the valid Administration of the Sacraments, and the due Exercise of the Ministerial Functions in the said Church."

Continuing, the convention stated its belief that, without questioning the rights, modes and forms of any other Christian bodies, it was their right "to have and enjoy the Continuance of the said *three Orders of Ministers* forever, so far as concerns matters *purely spiritual;* and that no Persons, in the Character of Ministers, except such as are in the Communion of the said Church, and duly called to the Ministry by regular Episcopal Ordination, can or ought to be admitted into, or enjoy any of the Churches, Chapels, Glebes, or other Property, formerly belonging to the Church of England in the State, and which by the Constitution and Form of Government is secured to the said Church forever, by whatsoever Name, she the said Church, or her superior Order of Ministers, may in future be denominated."

In regard to the liturgy, they recognized the necessity of adapting it to the late revolution, but expressed the hope that this "may and will be done, without any other or farther Departure from the Venerable Order and beautiful Forms of Worship of the Church from whence we sprung, than may be found expedient in the Change of our Situation from a DAUGHTER to a SISTER-CHURCH."

That which makes this declaration of the most historic significance is the light it throws upon the views held by the members of the Maryland Church in relation to the Church

[1] See Perry, *History of the American Episcopal Church,* v. 2, p. 3–5.

in neighboring states and communities. "We the Clergy of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Maryland . . . consider it as the undoubted Right of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in common with other Christian Churches under the American Revolution, to compleat and preserve herself as an *entire* Church, agreeably to her ancient Usages and Profession, and to have the full Enjoyment and free Exercise of those purely *spiritual Powers,* which are essential to the Being of every Church or Congregation of the *faithful,* and which, being derived only from Christ and his Apostles, are to be maintained *independent* of every *foreign* or other Jurisdiction, so far as may be consistent with the civil Rights of Society."

This declaration was signed by all the clergy present, fifteen in all, Dr. Claggett being one of that number. On June 23rd, 1784, three more signed the paper. It is believed that this is the first instance in which the name Protestant Episcopal was officially used.

The fear of a political episcopate was strongly shown in the report of the clergy and lay members who were appointed at the convention of 1784 to draw up a plan of ecclesiastical government for the Church in Maryland, and to define therein the duties of bishops, priests and deacons in matters spiritual. "According to what we conceive to be of true Apostolic Institution," reads the report, "the Duty and Office of a Bishop differs in nothing from that of other Priests, except in the Power of Ordination and Confirmation, and in the Right of Precedency in ecclesiastical Meetings or Synods, and shall accordingly be so exercised in this Church; the Duty and Office of Priests and Deacons to remain as heretofore." And then, apparently with an eye to the future, was added, "And if any, further Distinctions and Regulations in the Different Orders of the Ministry should afterwards be found necessary for the good Government of the Church, the same shall be made and established by the joint Voice and Authority of a Repre-

sentative Body of the Clergy and Laity, at future ecclesiastical Synods or Conventions."

Many of those who were bitterly opposed to a resident episcopacy because they did not approve of the complications of Church and State as exhibited in the English prelacy, had no objections to a purely spiritual episcopate. Thus, the Rev. Hugh Neill, who was a warm friend of American episcopacy, wrote in one of his letters to the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, "The Rev. Dr. Allison, Vice Provost of the College of Philadelphia, and who is at the head of the Presbyterians in the Province, assured me the other day, in a conversation upon the subject, that they had no objection to what he called Primitive Episcopacy, that is, Episcopacy without any civil power annexed to it, as he explained himself; and that he would be well contented if there was a Bishop of this sort in every Province in America."[1]

At the convention in 1783, the Rev. Dr. William Smith was elected Bishop of Maryland. Dr. Smith at that time was the dominating clerical figure in the state, and if a bishop were to be chosen then it was most evident that he was the logical candidate. Concerning this action Dr. Claggett wrote to his intimate friend, the Rev. William Duke, then a Methodist preacher, afterwards a clergymen of the Episcopal Church.

TO WILLIAM DUKE.

Sat. *Sept.* 20, 1783.

Dear Sir,

I received your Letter of the 14th of August just one Month after date, & I take this earliest Opportunity to inform you of it, lest you should think that my inactivity has got y^e^ better of my respect for you. I have seen S^r^ Robert Eden; but from him could learn little y^t^ was interesting to our

[1] Sprague, *Annals; Episcopalian*, p. 159.

Church, nor indeed did I expect any Thing of that Nature. I suppose you have long ago heard that y^e^ Clergy of y^e^ Protestant Episcopal Church met last month at Annapolis; and that we formed a Bill of Rights; chose Dr. Smith to go to Europe to be ordained an antistes, President of y^e^ Clergy, or Bishop (if that name does not hurt your feelings). He will probably be back some Time next Spring; in y^e^ mean Time, we have appointed three of y^e^ Clergy on each shore to licence Candidates for Holy Orders in our Church to act as Readers in y^e^ different vacant Parishes, Smith, Gorden, Keene, for Eastern Shore; Gates, West and your Humb. Serv^t^ are to negotiate this Business on y^e^ Western Shore—I should be glad to send you a copy of some of y^e^ parts of our Proceedings, but as I write this at a friends House in U. Marlbro I can not take time for that Purpose now—Mr. Edw^d^ Gantt I believe intends to decline his voyage to Europe & is at present at Mr. Calvert's he will (I believe) wait y^e^ event of Dr. Smith's Mission.

Yours affectionately,

THO^S^ JN^O^ CLAGGETT.

William Smith, the new bishop-elect, was born in Aberdeen, Scotland, about 1727, and came to America when twenty-three years old, engaging himself as a private tutor in the family of Governor Martin on Long Island. In 1753, when he had been in this country about three years, he was offered the charge of the seminary in Philadelphia, which afterwards grew into the University of Pennsylvania. He accepted, but first went to England for holy orders. He remained in Philadelphia engaged in this work until 1779, when the charter of the college was withdrawn, whereupon he removed to Chestertown, Maryland, becoming rector of the local parish and instituting a seminary, which immediately met with marked success, having 140 pupils the second year. In June, 1782,

the school was chartered by the General Assembly as a college, and Dr. Smith became its first president. It received the name of Washington College, after George Washington, who was the president of the board of trustees, others on the board being William Paca, governor of Maryland, Samuel Chase, signer of the Declaration of Independence, Dr. Smith, Robert Goldsborough, and other men prominent in Maryland affairs, all of which shows the high standing of the young institution.

In 1789 the charter of the Pennsylvania college was restored, and Dr. Smith returned to his former work. He died in Philadephia on the 14th of May, 1803, in his 76th year. There is no question that he was one of the most learned men of his time in America. He received the doctorate in divinity from Oxford, Aberdeen, and Trinity College, Dublin. He was always a member of the General Convention and generally its president. From 1783 to the end of his residence in Maryland he was president of the diocesan church conventions and one of the examiners of candidates for holy orders. He was a preacher of wide reputation, noted for his many occasional sermons, many of which have been published. He preached the sermon at the consecration of Bishop Claggett, in Christ Church, New York, September 17, 1792. He was on the committee with Bishop White (that is, afterwards Bishop) and the Rev. Dr. Wharton, of Delaware, appointed in 1785 to revise the prayer book to meet the needs of the American Church, and Dr. Smith is said to have been the chief factor in the compilation of that unsatisfactory and unacceptible liturgy.

As to his character and the reasons why he was never consecrated a bishop, Dr. Tiffany has given us a singularly unbiased and enlightening summary. "From what has appeared of Dr. Smith's characteristics it is not strange that with his learning, his natural powers, and his financial success in establishing his college, he should have been the instant and

unanimous choice of the eighteen Maryland clergymen for their first bishop. A man of such distinction at home and abroad at once towered above all local celebrities. It is not strange, either, that he should have had opponents as well in those less dominated by his inspiring personality. The laity were not so enthusiastic as the clergy who elected him. Many were strongly opposed to there being at that time any bishop in Maryland. Even among his warm personal friends there were those who disapproved of his election. Dr. White afterwards opposed its confirmation, not giving his reasons; but it is known that they were based on an estimate of his character. That character was generous, but not prudent. There was a secularity in his manner and tone of thought which savored more of worldly wisdom than of devout consecration. He was convivial, and may have at times lapsed into impropriety. The temporal rather than the spiritual concerns of the church engrossed his attention. In controversy, to which he was prone, the old Adam often got the better of the young Melanchthon. He was not, however, self-seeking. The opposition which he made to Dr. Seabury's consecration by the non-juring bishops, if it had any personal element, was also caused by the fear that such a procedure would shut the door to the application for the English succession. This result would have greatly diminished the prestige of the national church, and given it a provincial aspect and character, marking it as distinct from the English Church, rather than as its legitimate successor. Dr. Smith may himself have been convinced of the inappropriateness of his own election to the episcopate. Certain it is that he never applied for consecration in England, though his election and testimonials from his state were above suspicion. When his election was not confirmed by the General Convention which gave its imprimatur to White and Provoost and Griffith, his disappointment did not sour him. He continued to be one of the indefatigable

workers in the construction of the ecclesiastical organization in which he was not to be a chief officer. He was a co-laborer with White in all his efforts, and preserved a steadfast friendship for him, notwithstanding his opposition to his own consecration. Prejudiced at first against Seabury, both on account of his ecclesiastical views and his Scotch consecration, he was the chief mover in the measures which recognized the validity of his consecration and brought him into union with the General Convention. But both his good qualities and his defects were such as wisely to exclude him from the episcopate."[1]

Smith retained his prominence in Maryland ecclesiastical affairs and his apparent popularity with both clergy and laity as long as he resided in that state, but, whatever the cause may have been, it remains a fact that he never made any attempt to secure episcopal consecration, although his credentials were undoubtedly beyond dispute. Dr. Claggett during these years was steadily rising in influence and in the respect of his fellow men, but while Dr. Smith remained in the state the latter was always the star of first magnitude, though it is much to be doubted whether he had the nobility of character and the geniality of disposition that the kindly Dr. Claggett possessed to such a remarkable degree. Claggett was without doubt a strong force in the organization of the Episcopal Church in Maryland, much stronger than the appearance of his name on the public proceedings of the conventions would indicate, for throughout his long life he was retiring in nature, much preferring to exert his influence in a quiet personal way than by public demonstration. Beginning with the earliest conventions of which we have record he was nearly always present. He was on the standing committee each year after 1788, and on the so-called superintending committee in 1783 and perhaps in other years. He was president

[1] *Hist. of the Prot. Epis. Ch.*, 1899, p. 310-12.

of the diocesan convention in 1791 and 1792, at which latter convention he was elected bishop. He was a delegate to the General Convention of 1789, held in Christ Church, Philadelphia.

The General Convention of 1785 had taken into serious consideration the alteration of the English Book of Common Prayer to meet the needs of the American Church, certain changes very naturally being necessary because of the political revolution. The convention found the task of alteration too serious a one to be lightly decided, and so a committee consisting of the Rev. Messrs Smith, White and Wharton were, as stated above, appointed to publish the Book of Common Prayer with the alterations proposed. Dr. White was much engaged with the framing of the constitution and did little work on the proposed liturgy, Dr. Smith being the most active member of the committee. A large edition of the "Proposed Book" made its appearance on the first of April, 1786, and was pretty widely distributed among the various churches of the states. But it was a stupendous failure from the first. None of the diocesan conventions approved of it, the book was very little used, and so completely did it drop from notice that four years later, when a General Convention entered more successfully upon prayer book revision, it was not deemed necessary to mention the "Proposed Book," much less to abolish its use.[1] Dr. Claggett's attitude, discretely veiled as the views of his congregation (which they doubtless also were), is well represented in the following letter.

TO WILLIAM DUKE.[2]

VERY DEAR AND REVD SIR, HERMITAGE, *June* 19th, '86

Your little paper messenger[3] arrived here at last, having

[1] Procter, F., *Hist. of the Book of Common Prayer*, ed. by Frere, p. 239.

[2] Duke was by this time a clergyman in the Episcopal Church, having been ordained in 1785 by Bishop Seabury.

[3] Duke published several books and pamphlets, one of which is evidently referred to here.

been one month compleat on its Journey. I can with great Truth assure you, it was most welcome; because it flattered me with y^e^ Idea of possessing a warm Corner in y^e^ Heart of its Master. The proof it affords of y^e^ Energy & Vigour of your Mind makes me some Compensation for y^e^ Distress I feel on account of that Languor & Indisposition w^ch^ (I find) still continues to harass its poor Companion. You must, however, endeavor to drag your Corporation thus far shortly, as I never wanted to see your more. I have several things to consult with you, respecting our Church. There is no one here equally capable & well disposed for this Service & therefore my Thoughts on these Subjects in all probability will remain locked up in my own Breast until I have y^e^ Happiness of seeing you. I must endeavor to get you nearer to me next year, if it was only on self-interesting Motives, I need your advice & assistance frequently. It is now pretty clear that I shall not go to Philadelphia this Summer. I'm tired, my dear Sir, of being hurried about, merely to give a little Sanction to measures w^ch^ generally have received y^e^ *Royal assent* before I hear of them. You'll say perhaps that I ought to attend to my Duty & endeavor to have Matters altered if I think them amiss. How can any, y^e^ least alteration take place? Consider y^e^ Books are already printed at an enormous Expense & y^e^ Resistance to be overcome will be far greater than any Efforts of mine will be able to surmount.

The people of this Congregation (I mean y^e^ Church's real Friends, y^e^ Communicants) universally disapprove of y^e^ new Book, and I have written to Dr. West not to send me any of them at present, for I am persuaded it can not be introduced here, without giving great uneasiness and perhaps it would be attended with worse Consequences. Their Objections are such as these, viz: That our new Reformers have altered too much, & have Presbyterianized in many Instances,

particularly they have virtually denied y^e^ Doctrine of Regeneration in Baptism taught by y^e^ Church of England w^ch^ Tenet they think is sufficiently founded on John 3, 5, Acts 2, 38 & 22, 16, & several other parts of sacred writ, they contend that y^e^ primitive Ch^ch^ always held this Doctrine, & as a proof of it, they instance y^e^ Nicean Creed & y^e^ Evidence it affords of this Truth they think is y^e^ true Cause of its being displaced; among several other Things they oppose themselves warmly to y^e^ mutilating & leaving out great part of y^e^ Psalms of David, they contend that this Procedure may serve as a precedent for y^e^ Clergy's depriving them of any part or y^e^ whole of y^e^ sacred Canon, whenever they choose to introduce them to y^e^ halcyon Times of monkish Superstition: at any rate they think y^t^ such a practice has a tendency to weaken y^e^ authority of sacred Scripture & is flatly reprobated by y^e^ Scripture itself.—I have lately received a letter from a Presbyterian Clergymen of note w^ch^ contains an artful overture for a Convention (?) of y^e^ Churches couched in y^e^ form of a wish. An Important Subject—I have given no answer to y^e^ Letter, nor do I intend it, till I see you.—Think of these things & let me see you, or hear from you by a very safe hand as soon as possible. All here & at Mrs. Calvert's join in affection for you (I'm certain) & I remain, dear Sir,

Very sincerely, Your Friend & Brother,

Thos Jn^o^ Claggett.

TO THE REV. DR. WILLIAM WEST.

Aug. 23, 1788.

Rev^d^ & Dear Sir,

Your kind Letter by Mr. Burgis came safely to my Hands on Sunday night last. It rained very hard all day y^e^ Monday & on Tuesday. I set out with y^e^ enclosed to Calvert, & sent it by Boy to Mrs. Bond & was happy to find by y^e^ return of y^e^ Messenger y^t^ both y^e^ Ladies were well. I

understand from y^e^ Ladies y^t^ y^e^ Letter to Mrs. Bond was addressed to her by yourself, & I only admire how well you can write two different Hands.

By one of y^e^ Rules entered into at Baltimore I think we are bound to correspond with one another respecting y^e^ affairs of y^e^ Church; in this Situation I think it my Duty to advise with you respecting an affair that gives me no small uneasiness. It is briefly this. Our friend Mr. Mason Weems[1] since y^e^ breaking up of the Convention has adopted a Line of Conduct that I fear will be greatly prejudicial to y^e^ Church; he has I understand introduced y^e^ Methodist Hymns & Tunes in y^e^ publick Service. The other day I saw him at Annapolis. He told me that a Methodist Preacher had informed him that there were a number of people wavering that wished to join their Society but were withheld by thinking it disgraceful to make a profession of Methodism & entreated him to preach in their Meeting House to give weight & credit, & Sanction to y^e^ Methodist Religion. Mr. Weems informed me further that in his opinion as a Preacher of y^e^ Gospel he had no right to refuse this Invitation, but as an older Minister he requested my opinion on y^e^ Case as thus stated. I gave him a decided opinion against his doing of it, at least on y^t^ Principle, together with some of my Reasons; but when I found I had prevailed nothing with him, I requested that, as his own Character, the Interest of y^e^ Church, & y^e^ Situation of all his neighboring Ministers would be materially affected by such a Step, I begged that he would postpone y^e^ execution of his Design untill he saw me again, & we should have further Conversation on y^e^ Subject; to this he assented in positive Terms, notwithstanding which (I understand) a few Days after at a Quarterly Meeting in y^e^ City of Annapolis he exhibited in their Pulpit to y^e^ no small triumph of their Party.

[1] Mason Locke Weems, author of "*The Life of Washington*," etc.

His conduct (I verily believe) has materially affected y^e^ Interest of our Church in this Quarter & I do suppose that should his Example be followed by one or two more of our Ministers, that very speedily two or three Parishes will be entirely lopped off from our Church. In this View it is a very serious Consideration & I wish you would consider it maturely, & give me a decided opinion upon it.

I confess it is a very disagreeable Subject to address you on, & it gives me pain to do it. I have a regard for Mr. Weems, his zeal & attention to y^e^ Duties of his sacred Office merit esteem; but in proportion as this Zeal & Dilligence are applied to y^e^ Methodist interest it weakens us. You will be so kind as to consider how such a Line of Conduct as I have stated above squares with our Canons & Rules & let y^e^ whole matter rest with yourself untill you hear farther from, dear Sir

Your affectionate Friend & Bro.

THO^S^ JN^O^ CLAGGETT.

The following letter to Bishop William White was written soon after that gentleman and Bishop Provoost had returned to America after Episcopal consecration at the hands of the English prelates.

TO BISHOP WHITE.

ST. JAMES ANNARUNDEL COUNTY *April* 21 1787

RIGHT REV^D^ SIR,

I have just now heard by Mr. Weems of Your Return to America in Bishops Orders, the Information gives me great Pleasure, & I would beg leave thus early to congratulate you on the Occasion. Permit me Right Rev^d^. & Dear Sir, to inform you, that a Convention of our Church will be held at Chester Town in Kent County on the fourth Tuesday in May next. I have Reason to believe that the Lay Represen-

tation will be more complete than it ever has as yet been in this State, & that Matters of Magnitude will be then brought forward. In this Situation of our Affairs, I would take the Liberty to solicit your Presence there, if you can possibly make it convenient. A Gentleman of your Character, a Native of this State[1] a Bishop of our excellent Church presiding in our Church Assembly would give Weight & Dignity to all our Proceedings, it would have a direct Tendency to promote y^e^ Church, to unite us all firmly together, & to fix us in a more desirable Situation than we have been in since y^e^ Revolution. I should think myself highly honored, by y^e^ Reception of a Line from you by Mr. Weems' Return informing me whether you think it will be in your power to attend or not? In Case you can not possibly make it convenient I shall embrace the first Opportunity of paying my Respects to you personally in Philadelphia. With Sentiments of the most perfect Esteem I have the Honour to be Right Revd Sir, Your most dutifull Serv't

THO^S^ JN^O^ CLAGGETT.

Claggett's laudable ambitions for a large and influential convention do not seem to have been realized, for so far as we know there were only seven clergymen and five laymen present. Bishop White does not appear to have attended. Although we do not know the reason we can easily believe that duties crowded upon him during the first months of his episcopate, and that he felt he owed attention first to his own diocese and state.

Very different from the formal and rather stilted communication to Bishop White is the following chatty letter to his warm friend and correspondent, William Duke.

[1] Bishop White was a native of Philadelphia, but his father removed from Maryland three years before the future "father of the American Church" was born.

TO WILLIAM DUKE.

Jan. 28, 1792.

My Dear Friend,

In your Letter of y^e^ 25th of Dec^r^ (w^ch^ I have lately received) you mention a variety of topicks in your preface on w^ch^ you say you would wish to write if you had anything to say on them worth reading at length however you fix on a Subject, and what you do say on that goes fully to prove that none of them would have suffered by the masterly disquisitions of your Genius. In this Instance you remind me of Horace's delicate compliment to Virgil in one of his Satires where he is telling us that no Man could possibly write in y^e^ perfect style equal to Virgil, yet he does it in such Language as to convince us that he himself was fully equal to y^e^ Task. What you have heard respecting my removal to Croom is very true I have been here about two months—my House is far from being furnished but I have plenty of wood to burn & that circumstance reconciles us better to some inconveniences w^ch^ we are obliged to put up with especially in this cold weather. I do duty in both my old Parishes & expect to continue in that Line until August at least. I have told your quondam Hearers[1] that I would preach to them once a fortnight at y^e^ Chappel on a weak day gratis, & I have attended regularly; but have seldom seen a tolerable Congregation there, the weather it seems is too cold for them to turn out & I suppose it will shortly be too hot. You seem by your letters to wish to know how they do, I can only tell you that I hear (for I have not been much among them) that they eat, they drink, they fiddle, they dance, they play, & some of them lie and swear much as they use to do—gracious God, what is to become of them!—the little success y^t^ attended my labours for y^e^ three or four years I spent

[1] Duke was rector of St. Paul's, Prince George's County, from 1787 to 1791.

here formerly has often been y^e^ subject of melancholy reflection. I heartily wish that you may have more agreeable feelings whenever you contemplate this Topick—I dined about a fortnight ago at old Mrs. B's at dinner your name was mentioned y^e^ old gentleman observed that it had been currently reported y^t^ you was married in Baltimore, & asked me whether it was true? There was a certain female member of y^e^ family present who blushed & seemed a good deal confused when y^e^ Inquiry was made; the Rationale of this part of her conduct perhaps you may be better acquainted with than I am.

I have taken some steps since I have been here to get y^e^ Churches repaired, the work has been long in hand, but nothing done in it as yet. I mean to try to work them up to secure y^e^ buildings from immediate destruction. I hope they will be more wanted in some future period for y^e^ very purpose for which they were originally designed than they are at present. God is able to effect y^e^ mighty Revolution & whenever & wherever He shall be pleased to say let there be light, the darkness must fly before it. Johnny Weems preaches once a fortnight at y^e^ lower Church gratis, & I hear they like him. A Mr. Moscross a polite young Clergyman officiates for a hundred Guineas a year in y^e^ Queen Ann Parish. He pleases most of his Hearers; he is equally charming I am told in y^e^ Pulpit, at a Horse Race, & at y^e^ Card Table, i.e. he is polite & an accomplished Gentleman everywhere. My dear Sir when I see some of our Bren. acting in direct opposition to y^e^ few rules of Discipline that we have established, & hear them justified for so doing by y^e^ members of our Church it brings to my mind one of the seasonable observations that you formerly made on this subject viz: That without Discipline we could not reasonably hope for Reformation & that there was very little Prospect of our People's submitting to any Discipline. However as it appears to be absolutely necessary

we must with united force try to effect it. . . . My little family join in respect to you & I hope to see you early in y^e^ Spring. My dear Sir, we have been moving about it is true, but assure yourself that there is no alteration in the affection w^th^ w^ch^ I am

Your Friend & Brother,

Thos Jn° Claggett.

CHAPTER V

ELECTION TO THE EPISCOPATE

It is unnecessary here to review in length the struggle for the episcopate in the American colonies. Even among Churchmen it was not everywhere a struggle *for* the episcopate. In New England Churchmen were few, and not all of those looked with favor on the advent of bishops, as they saw them in English Church and state; in Virginia, where the Church had been an establishment, canons were passed defining and circumscribing the office of a bishop; and in South Carolina it was expressly stipulated that no bishop should be introduced; in short, that the Episcopal Church should not be an episcopal Church. In Maryland there had been some feeling of alarm, even among Churchmen, as to just how a bishop might conduct himself if they had one, and how much of the clerical and lay power he would take unto himself. But, on the whole, Maryland was anxious to secure the episcopate.

The majority of American Churchmen sorely felt the need of a resident bishop. Their sentiments were doubtless well expressed by the petition signed by Churchmen of Philadelphia, New Jersey and Maryland in 1718: "For want of episcopacy being established among us, and that there has never been any bishop sent to visit us, our churches remain unconsecrated, our children are grown up and cannot be confirmed, . . . our clergy sometimes under doubts cannot be resolved. But more especially . . . the vacancies which daily happen in our ministry cannot be supplied for a considerable time from England, whereby many congregations are not only become desolate, and the light of the gospel therein extinguished, but great encouragement is thereby given to secretaries of all sorts, which abound and increase among us."[1]

[1] Tiffany, *Hist. of the P. E. Church in the U. S.*, p. 272.

The opposition of Puritans, Presbyterians and other nonconformists was strong in proportion to the likelihood of an episcopate being established among them. "We hope in God," wrote Samuel Adams, in 1768, when a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, to its London agent, "such an establishment may never take place in America; we desire you would strenuously oppose it. The revenue raised in America, for aught we can tell, may be constitutionally applied toward the support of prelacy as of soldiers or pensioners."[1] All opposition seemed to be based on the assumption that a bishop in America would differ no whit from a bishop in England, and of some specimens of the latter, Churchmen and dissenters alike were united in their disgust and abhorrence. Churchmen, however, saw that a bishop transplanted to a missionary field might stay out of politics and return to primitive church ideals; the dissenters could not see that this satisfactory condition would be likely to result.

To Maryland came near belonging the honor of having the first American bishop, and that two years before Samuel Seabury was born. In 1727, the Bishop of London wrote to the Rev. Joseph Colebatch, then serving in Maryland, and invited him to come to England and be consecrated as his lordship's suffragan for the colonies.

"We have not been able," says Dr. Hawks, "after much research, to discover whether the Bishop acted in this matter under assurances from his majesty that Mr. Colebatch should be consecrated, or whether he hoped to procure the royal assent to the measure, after the arrival of the intended suffragan. The small measure of success that attended the oft repeated attempt from various parts of the continent to induce the authorities at home to send a bishop to America, leads us to adopt the opinion that the bishop had no positive assurance from the crown."[2]

[1] *Ibid*, p. 274–5.

[2] Hawks, *Maryland*, p. 196.

Mr. Colebatch, however, was not permitted to leave Maryland. A writ of *ne exeat* was issued by the Maryland court, which at that time was in exceedingly strained relations with the clergy, and the Bishop of London was obliged to drop the matter. This put an end to any direct attempt to establish a bishop in any of the southern colonies for the next forty years.

Very little is known of Joseph Colebatch. He is represented by his contemporaries as a worthy and pious man. His certificate of ordination to priest's orders,[1] dated July 4th, 1695, and signed by Henry Compton, Bishop of London, tells us that he was a Bachelor of Arts of Oriel College, Oxford. Coming immediately after ordination to Maryland, he became the rector of All Hallows Parish, Anne Arundel County, in 1696, where he remained until his death in 1734.

No work dealing with any phase of the church history of colonial Maryland can omit mention of the honored name of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Bray. As first commissary of the Bishop of London, he, like all his successors in that office, worked to secure the episcopate for the colonies. In the Fulham Manuscripts is a carefully elaborated plan for settling bishops in America, which Dr. Bray drew up and sent to Bishop Gibson, of London, October 28th, 1723.[2]

We have already seen Claggett's early desire for a bishop in America, as shown in his letters to the Rev. Weeden Butler. By the time he had reached his mature ministry the Churchmen of his state were nearly unanimous in their desire for the episcopate. Their debates in the diocesan conventions following the election of William Smith, were not so much did they want a bishop, as did they want bishops, for it was strongly felt that the geography of the state called for two bishops, one on the eastern, and one on the western shore.

[1] Original is in the Maryland Diocesan Library, Baltimore.
[2] Cross, *Anglican Episcopate and the American Colonies*, p. 105, note.

The following extract is taken from the Vestry Proceedings of St. James' Parish, Anne Arundel County, of which Dr. Claggett was rector.

"Oct. 18, 1790. . . . The Proceedings were then read, and highly Approved of by the Vestry except those Articles of the Constitution of this Church which appear to restrain the Convention from choosing more Bishops than One for this State. This Vestry are clearly of Opinion that One Bishop will be inadequate to the Duties which Aught to be Performed by him, Especially in the present Exigencies of this Church, and they therefore resolve that they will take Order in this Business before the Meeting of the next State Convention."

In consequence of their resolution to "take Order in this Business" the vestry met on the 12th of May, 1791, and appointed Mr. Richard Harrison their delegate to the convention due to be called in Baltimore in Whitsun-week. His instructions as they appear on the Vestry Proceedings are as follows:

"The Vestry taking into Consideration agreeably to their Resolution of the 18th of October last the Present Situation of the Church in Maryland as far as the same has come under their Observation and also having maturely examined the Constitution and Form of Government of the said Church passed at Easton last year and Reflecting on the Expediency of being represented in the House of Bishops in the General Convention of our Church to be holden at the City of New York in the year 1792 when they have reason to believe the important subject of the Articles of Religion will be taken up, are of the Opinion that the immediate Election of some fit and qualified Clergyman for a Bishop of this Church is a Measure that ought to be adopted and they do instruct their Delegate (if he thinks the Measure practicable) to move and vote for the same, and also to propose to the Convention that the 14th and 15th Articles of the Constitution of this Church may be constitutionally so modified as that one or more

Bishops may hereafter be elected for this Church, they being fully Persuaded that one Bishop will not be adequate to the Duties of his Office in this State, divided as it is by a large Bay and in which there appears to them a greater number of Parishes than can be properly superintended by one man."

The next convention met at Baltimore, June 16th to 18th, 1791, with Dr. Claggett the unanimously elected president. There appears to have been considerable discussion regarding proposed changes in the constitution, with the result that the convention agreed to submit the proposed changes to the consideration of the vestries of the various parishes. One of the proposed amendments submitted for the consideration of the vestries was the 16th of the constitution, which was to the effect that if it should be found expedient to divide the Church in the state into two or more dioceses, or districts, that a bishop should be elected for each diocese by the whole convention in the manner prescribed in the constitution, that is, nomination and election by the clergy by ballot, followed by the vote of lay delegates, for the approval or disapproval of the clerical vote, each order requiring a two-thirds vote.

On the last day of this convention it was

"Resolved, That Notice be given to the Members of this Church, that the Convention will, at the next annual meeting, proceed to the Election of a Bishop; or, should the Approbation of the Vestries effect the proposed Amendments of the Constitution, and the Step appear expedient, to the election of Bishops."

It would be interesting to know more particulars of Claggett's election to the bishopric, but the meagre convention journal offers little to satisfy the curiosity. The convention met at Annapolis, on Thursday, the 31st of May, 1792. Twenty-three clergymen and twenty-seven lay delegates were present, which was a somewhat larger number than had con-

vened the year before, when only eighteen clergymen and twenty laymen constituted the convention. Dr. Claggett was unanimously re-elected president, and the Rev. John Bissett, secretary. As was usually the case, this was about all that was accomplished the first day. On Friday, after consideration of the constitution, and voting upon the various proposed amendments, in which proceeding the sixteenth article, which proposed the division of the diocese, and the election of more than one bishop, was rejected, it was, on motion

"Resolved, That the Convention now proceed to the Election of a Bishop for this Church.

"Whereupon the Clergy proceeded, agreeably to the Constitution, to nominate and appoint a Bishop by Ballot; and the Rev. Dr. Claggett was unanimously chosen.

"This appointment was presented to the Order of the Laity, and was by them unanimously approved."

It was then immediately "Resolved, That the Testimonial in favour of the Bishop-elect, prescribed in the second Canon of the general Convention, be signed by the Members of this Convention."

BISHOP CLAGGETT'S TESTIMONIAL FOR CONSECRATION.

We whose Names are underwritten, fully sensible how important it is that the sacred office of Bishop should not be unworthily conferred & firmly persuaded that it is our duty to bear testimony on this solemn occasion without partiality or affection, do, in the presence of Almighty God, testify that the Rev^{d} Thomas John Claggett, D. D., is not so far as we are informed justly liable to evil report, either for error in religion, or for viciousness of life, & that we do not know or believe that there is any impediment or notable cause, for which he ought not to be consecrated to that holy office. We do moreover, jointly & severally declare, that having personally known him for three years last past, we do in

our consciences, believe him to be of such sufficiency in good learning, such soundness in the faith, & of such virtuous & pure manners & godly conversation, that he is apt & meet to exercise the office of a Bishop, to the honour of God, & the edifying of his Church, and to be an wholesome example to the flock of Christ.

JOHN BOWIE
JOSEPH MESSENGER
THOS. READ
JNO. W. COMPTON
R. HIGINBOTHAM
TOWNSHEND DADE
MASON L. WEEMS
EDWARD GANTT
COLIN FERGUSON
HATCH DENTT
WM. DUKE
JNO. COLEMAN
JOHN BISSETT
JAS. KEMP
SAML. KEENE
JOHN WEEMS
JOHN DE BUTTS
ALEX^{R} MCPHERSON
JOHN FRASER BOWIE
RICH^{D} SPRIGG, JUNR.
JOHN RAWLINGS
RICHARD HARRISON
RICHARD HARWOOD, JUNR.
JOHN RANDALL
SAM^{L} GODMAN
RICH^{D} CROMWELL
JAS. HOWARD
THO^{S} BAILEY
ELISHA HARRISON
W^{M}. PERRY
PETER CHAILLE
J. E. HAWARD
THOS. JNO. CHEW

The subscribers join most heartily in the within recommendation although they cannot sign it, because they have not had personal knowledge of the Rev^{d} D^{r} Claggett for three years last past, but they have the highest esteem for the said Rev^{d} D^{r} Claggett from his general Character.

WALTER MCPHERSON
JOSEPH G. J. BEND
ARCH^{D} WALKER
JOHN WHITE
JAS. O'BRYON
EDMUND KEY
JNO. KEENE
THO^{S} B. VEAZEY
JAMES LLOYD
WM. BARROLL
AQUILA BROWN
JNO. HINDMAN
EDWARD WORRELL
RICHARD WOOTTON

"And now," to quote again from Dr. Hawks, "the Maryland brethren wisely availed themselves of an opportunity, thus favorably presented, to take a step, the object of which was to remove from the Church at large a source of dissension, and bind together more closely the Churches in all the dioceses into one dissoluble fraternity. The church had at that time four bishops. Of these, one, Bishop Seabury, of Connecticut, had received consecration from the Scotch Episcopal Church, while Bishops Provoost, White, and Madison, had obtained their ministerial rank at the hands of the English prelacy. Something approaching to collision between Bishops Seabury and Provoost had arisen, from the unwillingness of the latter to recognize the episcopate of the former. By the judicious interposition and amiable spirit of that wise and good man, Bishop White, this difficulty had been removed, and Bishop Seabury, with the Churches of the Eastern States had come into complete union with their brethren in the other dioceses.

"It now occurred to the Maryland Church to prevent thereafter forever, the possibility of a question rising in the American Episcopal Church, on the relative validity of the English and Scotch Episcopate. They wished, if possible, to unite them in the person of their own bishop, (for American Episcopalians generally never held the Episcopacy of the Scottish Church to be less valid and regular than that of England) and thus hoped, in the future successive consecrations of American bishops, so completely to blend the two, that it would be hard to question either, without shaking, at least, the canonical consecration of the whole Episcopate of the Church in the United States. By an unanimous vote of the Maryland Convention, it was therefore resolved, that *all* the bishops should be requested to join in Dr. Claggett's consecration. This request was complied with, and the Maryland Church accomplished the end it so considerately desired, for

not a Bishop has been consecrated since Bishop Claggett, who must not, to make his consecration canonical, claim the succession, in part at least, through the Scottish Episcopate."[1]

We do not know who the primary mover was in this judicious act, but from what we know of Dr. Claggett's love for peace and harmony, it is easy, and perhaps permissible in the absence of direct information, to imagine that such an action might have proceeded from the conciliatory bishop-elect himself.

The general convention following Claggett's election convened in New York, on Tuesday, September 12th, of that same year, holding their sessions in certain rooms set apart for their use in the City Hall, and divine services in Trinity Church, near by. In due order the necessary testimonials were presented and signed by the house of deputies and approved by the house of bishops, and on Monday morning, at half past ten o'clock, the 17th of September, both houses adjourned, and "proceeded to Trinity Church, to the consecration of the Rev. Thomas John Claggett, D. D.; and after divine service returned to their house, when the Right Rev. Bishop Claggett took his seat."

In these simple words does the Journal of the Convention record the consecration of the first bishop to receive that rite on American soil. His consecrators, as we have seen, were the entire house of bishops; Seabury, of Connecticut, White, of Pennsylvania, Provoost, of New York, (who presided as consecrating bishop) and Madison, of Virginia, all of whom had received their episcopal orders abroad. Following the ceremony the house of bishops resolved that a certificate of the consecration be entered on the journals of that house, and that the rector, church wardens, and vestry of Trinity Church, be requested to enter it on their church book.

[1] Hawks, *Maryland*, p. 310–12.

CERTIFICATE OF CONSECRATION OF BISHOP CLAGGETT.[1]

Know all men by these Presents, that we, Samuel Provoost, D. D., Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of New York, Presiding Bishop; Samuel Seabury, D. D., Bishop of Connecticut and Rhode Island; William White, D. D., Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; James Madison, D. D., Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Virginia; under the protection of Almighty God, in Trinity Church in the City of New York, on Monday, the seventeenth of Sept^r, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two, did then and there rightly and canonically consecrate our Beloved in Christ, Thomas John Claggett, D. D., late Rector of St. James' Parish in the State of Maryland, of whose sufficiency in good Learning, soundness of the Faith, and purity of Manners, we were fully ascertained, into the office of Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the said State, to which the said Thomas John Claggett hath been elected by the Convention of the said State. In testimony whereof we have signed our Names and caused our Seals to be affixed; given in the City of New York this nineteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two.

Samuel Provoost	[L. S.]
S. Seabury	[L. S.]
Wm. White	[L. S.]
J. Madison	[L. S.]

On the day following the consecration ceremony, Bishops Claggett and Madison were named as a committee to report a plan for supporting bishops on the frontiers of the United States, a work which was very near to the heart of Claggett, as we know from his various attempts to aid in this cause.

[1] Original is in the Maryland Diocesan Library, Baltimore.

After his election to the episcopate, Claggett resigned the joint rectorship of St. James' Parish, Anne Arundel County, and All Saints', Calvert County, which he had held since 1786, and returned to "Croom," his family estate, in Prince George's County, where in 1793, he again became rector of St. Paul's Parish, where he remained, in conjunction with his duties as bishop, until failing health and advancing years compelled him, in 1808, to seek a smaller parish.

The following letter to his friend Duke, is chiefly of interest in showing Bishop Claggett's genuine humility and warmth of friendship.

BISHOP CLAGGETT TO THE REV. WILLIAM DUKE.

Novm. 27, 1792.

My Dear Friend,

I heard that Colo[l]. Weems had received a large Letter for me, w[ch] he was desired to pay particular attention to. I consecrated y[e] new Church at Annapolis yesterday, & on my return called on y[e] Colo[l]. to get y[e] Letter. I received it from him last Night, & had y[e] pleasure to find it was a Letter from you enclosing y[e] Manuscript.[1] I thank you for it, I have not yet had time to read it. Indeed I had no expectation of having an opportunity of acknowledging y[e] receipt of it until this morning happening to meet Cap[n] Mills (y[e] bearer of this) he informed me that he was just about to sail to Elkton, & I requested him to deliver it to you. I expect to visit your part of y[e] Diocese next thing immediately after y[e] breaking up of y[e] Convention. You will please to give this Information to any of our Bre[n] in your quarter & request them to prepare y[e] youth for Confirmation. Mills is in a great hurry, I shall add no more, only to beg of you, if you have no better Reason,

[1] Duke was the author of several books and pamphlets, and his correspondence shows that he frequently submitted manuscript to the bishop for criticism and suggestion.

than y^e^ one I am naturally led to attribute it to, to begin & end y^e^ Letters you address to me in the same manner you used to do. You may put what you please on y^e^ outside of them; but in y^e^ Inside it will give me pain to find any difference in your address. Right Rev^d^ Sir, & I am, Right Rev^d^ Sir, &c., makes me but a poor compensation for y^e^ loss of some other Epithets w^ch^ gave me much more satisfaction when you honored me with them. May God bless you, my d^r^ Friend, make you more & more useful & happy in this world, & at last admit you to y^t^ enjoym^t^ of himself in y^e^ w^ld^ to come.

THO^S^ JN^O^ CLAGGETT.

The bishop did not hold confirmation at the time he consecrated St. Anne's Church, Annapolis. We know this positively, for on a little slip of paper in the Maryland archives are the names of eleven persons, confirmed in All Saint's Parish, Frederick County, March 24, 1793. Opposite the name of Eleanor Grosh is written in Bishop Claggett's hand: "The first person I ever confirmed."[1] The next day the bishop confirmed twenty-one in St. Peter's Parish, Frederick County; on the 27th of March, nineteen in Rock Creek Chapel, Prince George's Parish, Montgomery County; on Easter Monday about forty in his own parish church of St. Paul's, and in the chapel connected with the parish, his daughters, Mary Ann and Priscilla Elizabeth being among the confirmed; and on the 22nd of April, twenty-one persons, including two negroes, in William and Mary Parish, Charles County. On the 3rd of June, 1793, in accordance with his proposal to visit the eastern shore, he confirmed twenty-four in old St. Paul's, Kent County. Of course, we must understand that these were not all new members of the Church; many of

[1] This Eleanor Grosh married a Mr. Hart, brother-in-law of Henry Clay, and his sister, Sophia Grosh, who was confirmed at the same time, married the Rev. Mr. Clay, brother of Henry Clay.

them were adults who had been communicants of the Church for many years, but who had never had a bishop in their midst to confer the apostolic rite of confirmation.

The Maryland convention of 1793, the first over which Bishop Claggett presided as its episcopal head, convened at Easton, May 23. The bishop delivered a charge to his clergy, for which he received their thanks in a resolution, and a request that he furnish a copy for publication. No copy, however, has come to our notice. This convention took up the subject of an Episcopal Church in Washington. This is probably the first formal occasion on which this theme was discussed. Twelve trustees were appointed for the execution of plans in this direction, and a resolution passed that the convention would later propose a lottery scheme for building a church, a method very common and considered entirely above-board in those days.

At the convention of 1795 the bishop reported that these trustees informed him that nothing had been done under the appointment, and that the prospect of success from a lottery at present appeared to him very small. So the convention decided that inasmuch as the city of Washington and the neighboring territory had been erected into a distinct parish, their interposition was no longer necessary and the scheme was thereupon dropped.

For all the twenty-four years that Claggett served as bishop he never received from the convention a dollar as salary, and very far from full payment for all his expenses. At the 1793 convention the first steps were taken towards meeting the latter, and it was resolved that a sermon should be preached annually in each parish, for the purpose of raising money for defraying expenses incurred by the bishop in discharge of episcopal duties. This topic was conscientiously and gloomily discussed at nearly every succeeding convention, but there never was a year when the proceeds from this

source equalled the bishop's modest but necessary expenses.

Private means was decidedly a requisite to episcopal honors in those days, and Bishop Claggett was fortunate in having a private income sufficiently large to make him independent of ecclesiastical emoluments.

In this convention of 1793 an amendment to the constitution was proposed, approved and ordered to be printed for the consideration of the respective vestries, with a view to permitting, in the absence of the bishop, the appointment of a temporary chairman of a diocesan convention. Heretofore no such provision had been made, which seemed to imply that if the bishop could not be present to preside there could be no convention. The convention of the following year unanimously ratified this amendment, as it was obvious any intelligent body would do when the matter was brought to its attention.

In the convention of 1794, which met at Baltimore, June 12th to 14th, the bishop delivered an address which is printed in full in the journal, in accordance with resolution. He reported that since the last convention at Easton he had completed a visitation of all the parishes in the diocese, except those in Somerset and Worcester Counties, the two lower counties of the eastern shore, and a few other parishes, most of which were vacant. He had intended to complete his tour of the diocese before that session, but "a long and painful illness has prevented the execution of my original design."

This is the earliest mention we find of that painful disease, rheumatism and an accompanying nervous disorder of which, from that time on, the bishop was never wholly free. For the remainder of his life all work was done against heavy odds, much of it in acute pain. Many of his letters beg the recipient to excuse poor penmanship, as the pain in his arm was so keen as barely to permit him to hold a pen, some of them were written in bed, when bolstered by pillows, and

sometimes his daughter was obliged to act as amanuensis. Sometimes engagements had to be canceled, and in the latter years of his life traveling was nothing short of an agony, and was performed only in the grim determination of a truly brave man to do his duty.

"I am happy to inform you," says the bishop in his address, to return from our digression, "that in the course of my visitations I have admitted three gentlemen to Priests', and two to Deacons' orders; I have seen six new churches building, several old ones under repair, and I have confirmed about 2,000 persons; having also ordered that their names be registered in the parish books. Great respect has been uniformly shown to the ordinance of confirmation by the members of our Church, and I have been told by some of my clerical brethren, that (by the blessing of God) it has already been followed by the most happy effects in their different congregations. These are all flattering circumstances. Our minds must contemplate these events with pleasure."

The bishop proceeds to point out, on the other hand, certain defects in church polity, and certain evils arising from her present circumstances, which threaten serious calamities. With reference to clerical discipline he had this to say:

"By the 10th article [of the Constitution], which respects discipline, no clergyman can be amenable for ill conduct to our ecclesiastical tribunals, unless accused by his own vestry, or by four communicants of his own parish.

"The constitution has now been in force for several years, and there has not been a single instance of accusation against any clergyman. I do most firmly believe that our clergy are a respectable body of men, and such as would do honor to any society upon earth, yet, even with these prepossessions in their favour, I can hardly persuade myself that there is not one unworthy character among them. Even in the Apostolick College there was a Judas Iscariot. To be plain: I do know

one instance, in which a vestry have acknowledged to me that they had neglected this duty, and pleaded as an apology 'that it was a painful thing to them, to exhibit an accusation against their own pastor:' they went farther; they acknowledged that their Church had greatly suffered from this neglect of their duty."

In accordance with the bishop's request that action should be taken in this matter, the convention resolved, and published for the consideration of the vestries, an amendment to the effect that if the standing committee had, on good information, the knowledge that a clergyman had committed an offence for which he ought to be tried, the committee should proceed to inquire into the case, even though no accusation had been presented by the vestry or by four communicants. This direct and explicit charge seems to have been directed against the Rev. Townshend Dade, rector of Eden, now St. Peter's Parish, Montgomery County, who was brought to trial the following year for drunkenness, in which he put forth no defence, and was consequently deposed from the ministry.

Bishop Claggett also called the convention's attention to the incompetent provision for the clergy, and to remedy this deficiency he recommended the pew-rent scheme as a substitute for the voluntary subscription plan then in vogue, which worked so poorly that many able ministers were obliged to live on a pittance less than that paid to day laborers. "Composed of flesh and blood," said the bishop, in his address to the diocese at large, in 1794, "they require, Brethren, to have the decays of nature repaired by food, and the inclemencies of the weather moderated by raiment." Many of the clergymen (in other churches as well as in the Episcopal) were obliged to teach school, do private tutoring, or even launch into commercial ventures for the comfortable support of their families. One clergyman even resorted to the conducting of a distillery. The Rev. James Laird, rector

of Somerset Parish, Somerset County, wrote to Bishop-elect Kemp, on the 19th of July, 1814, evidently in response to an admonition from the latter: "For engaging in the distillery business I am truly sorry, and deeply mortified, since it is so exceptionable in public estimation; and I will certainly divest myself of it as soon as I possibly can. Its situation and the apparent advantage of connecting it with my mill, determined me to adopt it as the best expedient for supplying a large deficit in my annual revenue by giving up the Academy. The effect it has had, or may have on my character, was not realized, nor did my friends ever hint it to me before I purchased."

"In the progress of my visitation," proceeds the bishop, "I observed that the slender patrimony of the Church is, almost in every parish, much neglected; the glebes have been injured; most of the parsonage houses are in a state of dilapidation; the parish libraries now in the hands of the vestries, have lately been greatly damaged."[1]

The convention gave respectful heed to this address of their bishop, and evidently tried to correct the errors to which their attention had been called. They passed a resolution that an address be made to the members of the Church in Maryland stating these facts, and calling upon them "to strive earnestly to remedy the evils and to use their utmost exertions for promoting the interests of their venerable Church." A committee was also appointed to petition the legislature for amendments to the vestry act of 1779, which had not proved itself adequate in serving the interests of the Church. Ministers were so few, and vacant parishes were so many, that

[1] Most of these parish libraries were founded by Dr. Thomas Bray, the Bishop of London's commissary to Maryland and Virginia, between 1696 and 1730, the date of Bray's death. The books are now widely scattered; many, of course, are destroyed; St. John's College, Annapolis, has several hundred of them, the Maryland Diocesan Library, of Baltimore, about 35, other institutions a few stray copies, and some are in private hands, though it is difficult to understand how they rightly came there.

the convention resolved that every candidate for orders should become a lay reader, and be stationed in some vacant parish by the bishop. There seemed to be no danger that the supply would exceed the demand.

Altogether the convention of 1794 seemed very much in earnest for the welfare of the Church, and their deliberations have thrown considerable light on its condition. For a time, as we shall see, improvement did follow, but the Maryland Church was destined to sink yet lower in numbers and in power before it should stand firmly on its feet as a growing and influential body.

The address to the Church at large which the bishop and a committee were requested to prepare was duly presented to the people's attention. It is full of sound judgment, common sense and fatherly advice, and is a good specimen of Bishop Claggett's literary style, for it is signed by the bishop in behalf of the committee, and is generally acknowledged to have been substantially the work of his pen. Infidelity was the chief evil against which revealed religion was compelled at that time to fight; Tom-Paineism was rampant both in Europe and in America, the book-stalls were being flooded with pamphlets and tracts, most of which were of small value, bearing upon one side or the other of this live topic, and the bishop was thoroughly awake to the gravity of the moral tendency, finding expression in his address in the following passage:

"It is now some time since the mournful voice of religion hath been heard, complaining of the unmerited neglect with which she hath been treated. The flattering prospect of brighter days, marked with rational zeal, and ardent piety with which hope enlivened this melancholy period seems to be disappearing. Irreligion hath succeeded a cold indifference towards religion. Sentiments are uttered, in the presence of crowded audiences, drawn together by the novelty of the

doctrines, or from the instability of religious principles, which ought to alarm every friend to morality, to social peace and order; and which have already produced correspondent practices. Brethren, suffer not this irreligion to gain ground, to undermine your true happiness in this world, and to endanger your felicity in the everlasting state. Let it be discouraged by your conversation, and condemned by your actions. Mark, as your greatest enemies, those whose words or deeds are tinctured with it, in the slightest degree; and abhor their principles, as worthy of the greatest detestation. Is it not high time for the friends of Christianity to be seriously alarmed, when men possessing the power of one of the greatest empires in the world, have, by a solemn decree, denied all revealed religion? When the shops of our Book-sellers contain publications avowing the same sentiments, and recommended to our Notice in the public prints?"[1]

[1] The Convention of the P. E. Church in the State of Maryland to the Vestries and other Members of the said Church. 1794.

CHAPTER VI

A NEW VESTRY ACT

The Church people of Maryland had long recognized the incompetency of their existing vestry act which was passed in 1779. This act did not provide for the rector as a member of the vestry and did not permit the vestry to buy or sell any property of the Church. At the convention of 1794 a committee, consisting of the Rev. Messrs. Thomas F. Oliver and Joseph G. J. Bend and Messrs. Samuel Chase, Gustavus Scott and Luther Martin, was appointed to petition the legislature for such amendments to the existing act as should appear to them desirable. The different vestries were at the same time requested to send to this committee such remarks on and criticisms of the act as might assist it in its duty.

We have already referred to Bishop Claggett's address to the vestries and members of the Church which the convention of 1794 requested him to prepare. In this address the bishop spoke of the need of a vestry act which would be more precise and more adequate. "Some years have now elapsed," said the bishop, "since the Legislature passed the act for the establishment of select vestries. Imperfect and defective as it is, it dispenses to us certain benefits; but alas! such is the frozen unconcern which pervades many parishes, that they have neglected to choose vestries, even for the preservation of their Churches and Glebes. We entreat, we adjure you, Brethren, to show a greater zeal for your excellent Church, and not to refuse the care and charge of her, with that property, which our civil constitution and laws have entrusted and secured to you for the use and support of her ministers. But as we consider the vestry act inadequate to its objects,

we wish you to communicate such defects as have occurred to you, to the committee appointed by this convention to petition the General Assembly for a law better adapted to the exigencies of our Church. We wish not to do, or even to offer the least injury or offence to our brethren of other religious societies; nor shall we ask for any legislative provisions, which we wish not to every society, which may desire them."[1]

Nothing came from this committee, they reporting to the convention the following year that through unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances they had not made any application to the legislature. The convention of 1796, which met at Easton, was very sparsely attended, as conventions on the eastern shore were beginning to be, and nothing except routine business was transacted. In 1797 the bishop in his address to the convention again raised the question of a vestry act, and assuring the convention that the previous obstacles were no longer present, recommended a further attempt to secure legislation. In accordance, Bishop Claggett, the Rev. Mr. Bend, Samuel Chase, Philip Barton Key and William Cook were appointed a committee to secure the passage of a bill which had already received the approbation of the convention.

In October, 1796, Bishop Claggett and a majority of the standing committee addressed a circular letter to the rectors and vestries of the respective parishes, in which they reviewed the history of the last two years' attempts to secure a new vestry act, and presented a synopsis of the bill proposed as drawn up by the committee appointed in 1794. It would appear that previous to the convention of 1797 Bishop Claggett had been in Annapolis in the interest of a new bill regarding vestries. "I was written to by some of y^{e} Committee," said he in a letter to the Rev. Dr. James Kemp, from

[1] "The Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Maryland to the Vestries and other members of the said church." [Pamphlet.] p. 7.

his home in Croom, February 11, 1797, "to attend at Annapolis to prefer our Petition respecting amendments to the Vestry Act. I attended on the day they appointed, & for several days after, but not one of them appeared & as they had y^e^ Law I could not prefer it myself. I had conversation with many members of y^e^ Assembly, & found them well disposed to do every reasonable thing for y^e^ advancement of our Church. I wish I may ever see another such assembly. I intend to use my endeavors to bring y^e^ bill we have framed before our next Convention & to endeavor to get them to recommend it to y^e^ next assembly." A hint as to the reason for this delay is found in a letter from Dr. Bend, rector of St. Paul's, Baltimore, to Dr. Kemp, January 23, of the same year: "But perhaps you know before this that the bill never came before the assembly. I showed it to our vestry who were opposed to it. I consulted Mr. Chase & Mr. Chase, Mr. Cook; & we determined not to risk the loss of it, by pushing it forward in defiance of this parish." Dr. Bend refers more particularly to the opposition in St. Paul's in a letter dated November 28, 1797: "Our vestry has made very serious opposition to the vestry bill of the late Convention; & to a memorial presented by them to the House of Delegates, they have added a petition from forty of the most respectable parishioners. This memorial & petition notwithstanding, leave has been given to bring in a bill agreeably to the prayer of the petitioning committee; & Mr. Chase thinks the bill will become a law. The opposition from our parish will probably have the less weight from their having entered into a detail of objections, from which the most inattentive members of the Legislature must perceive, that they have greatly misunderstood the bill. To render its passage, however, more certain, the Committee introduced into it some alterations of which the most important respects the Church wardens, who will be left on the present footing."

At the convention of 1798 Bishop Claggett reported in behalf of the committee that the vestry act had been brought before the legislature but had been postponed to the next session. The committee on the state of the Church later in the convention prepared and presented to that body a memorial addressed to the state legislature, which was unanimously adopted and duly presented. This memorial was signed by the bishop; whether he assisted the committee in its preparation we do not know. In this memorial the convention stated their case as follows: "Under their present vestry act, defective and imperfect as it must be acknowledged to be, they beheld with grief that Church which the Redeemer of the world had founded, and which the sufferings and virtues of many great and good men had cemented, crumbling to pieces. They had no power to build or repair churches, to purchase ground for church-yards, nor to acquire or dispose of property of any kind. And it must be obvious, that unless the civil authorities dispensed some power of this kind, no society whatever can long exist, or can attain the object of their association. When they looked forward to the result of their present situation, the prospect was dark and comfortless. They saw few men of talents and learning entering into the ministerial office; few parents encouraging their children to qualify themselves for a profession, which, to many other difficulties, added the inconvenience of poverty. They beheld those desolating principles, which, in other countries have annihilated everything that can make life desirable, rapidly gaining ground, and in their train fanaticism, equally destructive of genuine piety and morality.

"That they have been often relieved from some of their embarrassments by legislative assistance, they acknowledge with gratitude; but it was both painful to them, and expensive to the state, to be coming forward with applications at every session. Particularly cautious not to interfere with the rules

or polity of other religious denominations, nor, indeed, wishing to secure to themselves any advantages which should not be extended to them, your memorialists saw with pleasure, that the legislature of Maryland had granted acts of incorporation to others, as full and extensive, differing only in some things, relative to internal government, as the law, for which they petitioned. Nay, they flattered themselves, that their plan was preferable, in as much as it precluded the necessity of any future applications."[1]

They called attention to the extreme importance, especially to country parishes, of having the ministers considered members of the vestries, and that this plan had been adopted in the Protestant Episcopal Church in every state except that of Maryland.

At the November session of 1798 the vestry bill was presented and became a law on January 15th, 1799. By the new act it was provided that, "Every free white male citizen of this state, above twenty-one years of age, resident of the parish where he offers to vote six months next preceding the day of election, who shall have been entered on the books of the parish one month at least preceding the day of election as a member of the protestant episcopal church, and who shall also contribute to the charges of the said parish in which he offers to vote such sum as a majority of the vestry shall annually, within ten days after their election, in writing, make known and declare, not exceeding two dollars, shall have a right of suffrage in the election of vestrymen for such parish." The qualifications of voters being thus settled, the act then provided for their registration, how vacancies in the vestry were to be filled, what oaths were to be taken, the days on which the vestries were to be held, that the rector, who should be considered a member of the vestry, should preside, with a right to vote upon an equal division, except in cases where he

[1] Journal P. E. Church in Maryland, 1798, p. 9.

was in any manner personally interested, that he should have possession and enjoyment of the glebe lands, and other property belonging to the parish, unless he otherwise contracted with the vestry, that the vestry should have an estate in fee simple in all churches and chapels, glebes and other lands, declaring them to have a good title and estate in all the property once belonging to the Church of England, which the legislature recognized as being the same with the Protestant Episcopal Church of Maryland. If a rector committed waste or damage to church property he should be liable to pay treble damages. Two church wardens were to be chosen annually by the vestry, who should have the power to keep the peace. The vestry were given the power of electing the minister and making a contract with him for his services. If in any parish there were two ministers they were to be associate rectors, presiding over the vestry by turns, unless one should be of an inferior order, in which case the other should be rector and preside over the vestry. The law then provided for the keeping of a parish register, a duty which in some parishes had in the past been shamefully neglected, imposed a fine on vestrymen for refusing to serve when elected, or failing to attend vestry meetings, and, most important in the new law, made the vestry of each parish an incorporated body, with power to acquire and hold property for the use of the parish, "provided, that the clear yearly value of the estate of any vestry (exclusive of the rents of pews, collections in churches, funeral charges, and the like), shall not exceed two thousand dollars."

The vestry were forbidden to dispose of any part of the church property, without the consent of a majority of their body, of whom the rector was to be one, and also without the consent of both of the church wardens; and when any property was sold by the vestry, they were forbidden to apply any of the principal of the money so acquired towards any

debt contracted with their minister on account of his official duties. They might at any time buy at least two acres of land for a burial ground, or a site for a church or parsonage house, and might sell or rent pews. And finally, to the convention was given the power to unite or divide parishes, and to make new parishes.[1]

St. Paul's Church, Baltimore, fought the bill to the last; Dr. Bend writing to his friend Duke, on December 27, 1798: "Our Vestry Bill has passed and with no material alterations. Our Vestry persisted in their opposition, and sent down two of their body, George Buchanan and Dixon Brown, to arrest it in the Senate. But on the very day of, or the day after, their arrival, the Senate passed it." And in a letter a few weeks later he adds, "It is not what I wished it to be, but it contains some valuable properties which atone for its defects."

[1] Kilty, *Laws of Maryland*, 1798, ch. 24.

CHAPTER VII

THE PLAN OF VISITING MEMBERS

Writing to his friend Duke, on November 29th, 1792, shortly after his consecration, Bishop Claggett says:

"You take it for granted that I am already vested with a power to call on y^e^ members of y^e^ Standing Committee to assist me in y^e^ laborious duty of visiting y^e^ Parishes. I wish it was so, may I wish it extended my Powers in this respect a little farther, so as to enable me to call on you to visit Mr. Bissett's District (as I understand he is removed); but y^e^ fact is, such a measure is only proposed to y^e^ different vestries for their considerations to be ratified next Convention, if then approved of."

The next convention, that of 1793, adopted the amended article of the constitution which provided that while there was a bishop in the Church, the offices of President of Convention, and the power of the Standing Committee in visiting and superintending parishes should be superseded, and the same should devolve upon the bishop, but that he should be empowered to call upon any of the members of the standing committee to assist him in visiting the various parishes. Thus the bishop secured what he seems to have so ardently desired, but in its practical workings the plan proved a dismal failure.

This provision, probably peculiar to the diocese of Maryland, had its origin in the first and second canons, or rules, ratified in the convention at Baltimore, May 29, 1788, which are as follows:

"I. At each annual Convention five clergymen on the Eastern and the like number on the Western Shore, shall be elected and appointed as a Superintending Committee; who shall have

the sole and exclusive rights following, viz. To examine and recommend candidates as well for Holy Orders, as for a settlement in any parish in this State; and likewise to superintend the concerns of the Church in general, and of parishes or congregations in particular, on their respective shores.

"II. The committee shall, by common consent among themselves, appropriate to each member a certain district or number of parishes for his peculiar superintendence; which shall be visited by him at least twice a year; at which times the visiting member shall apply to the vestries for such information as the nature of his duty may require; and also advise with them relative to the best and most effectual means for improving the condition of their parishes, or rectifying any misconduct or error that may be worthy of notice."

In the convention of 1789 both a superintending committee and a standing committee were appointed; in 1790 the former seems to have been merged in the latter, as only a standing committee was elected, consisting, according to the recently amended constitution, of six clergymen on the western, and four on the eastern shore. This act, by the way, of electing one member less on the eastern, and one member more on the western shore, is one of the signs about this time that gradually the western shore was forging ahead in influence, population and power.

This, in brief, is the history of the growth of the plan of making the standing committee a visiting committee, and it was natural that after the election of a bishop the minds of the bishop and the convention should turn to this committee as an assistance in visiting the various parts of the diocese and in informing the ecclesiastical authority of the conditions there found.

In the convention of 1796, a canon was adopted empowering the bishop to allot to each member of the standing committee a certain district to be visited; and likewise to prescribe

to him in writing whatever questions, respecting the conduct of ministers, the state of religion, and the condition of the parish that he might think requisite to lead him to a sufficient knowledge of the state of his diocese. The visiting members were to lay these questions before the vestries, who should return direct answers, and these answers after being turned over to the bishop should be laid before the convention, or committee, as the case might require.

The following circular letter was sent by the bishop to all whom he appointed members of the visiting committee:

GENTLEMEN,

Together with this you will receive a copy of the Interrogatories I have drawn up in consequence of the Canon passed by our last Convention; which I doubt not you have received from the Secretary of the Convention for your information & direction. These Interrogatories are to be propounded to the different Rectors and Vestries in the Diocese. The object which the Convention appears to have had in view in adopting this measure, is to give a more direct and energetic operation to our Laws than they have hitherto had. You will know, Gentlemen, that good Laws are necessary to the well-being of every Society, & that Laws which are not enforced are a mere dead Letter, & that in some Respects to have them is worse than to have none. You will perceive that I have arranged the Interrogatories under the different heads directed by the Canon, & that they have for their basis the Constitution and Canons of our Church.

I flatter myself that they will meet your approbation & that you will use your utmost endeavors to give them the desired effect. Permit me to recommend to you an unremitted exertion of your Powers in the discharge of the important duties of our respective offices. The influence of rational Religion on the interests of Society, the effects on the eternal happiness of mankind, & the sacred obligation we have come under all

call loudly upon us (especially at this time) to exert every nerve in its service.

I trust therefore that your Zeal will be proportionate to the magnitude of its Object, & I beg leave to assure you of my determined Resolution to co-operate with you to the utmost of my power, in promoting the Interest of our Church, & manifesting my paternal regard for it—And also that esteem & Respect with which I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,

Your affectionate Diocesan,

Thos Jno Claggett.

These are the questions propounded by the bishop in his "Interrogatories," mentioned above:

QUESTIONS PROPOSED TO THE VESTRIES.

Does your minister use all diligence in performing divine service, according to the manner prescribed in the rubric? And in preaching to the people every Lord's Day, in the Churches and chapels in your parish?

Does your minister from time to time, explain to the people the liturgy of the Church?

Does he baptize children in the churches and chapels, when offered to him?

Does he diligently prepare children and others for the holy ordinance of confirmation, by catechizing them?

Does he regularly administer the holy sacrament of the Lord's supper at least three times in the year, in each of the churches and chapels in your parish?

Do you believe him to be careful not to admit any improper characters to the holy communion?

Do you know whether he makes out and continues, an exact register of all the communicants and adults within his cure; and also of the baptisms, marriages, and funerals, which he celebrates?

Is he always ready, as far as you know, to visit the sick members of the church, when he is called on for that purpose?

Do you know or believe that he is justly chargeable with disorderly, scandalous, or immoral conduct; such as drunkenness, swearing, lying, gaming, and the like; or with any other conduct prohibited in the Canons and Constitution and the 17th canon of the Church of Maryland?

Of the State of Religion—To Ministers & Vestries Conjointly

Does the number of communicants in your parish increase?

Do virtue and piety gain ground among you?

Has infidelity made any progress among you?

What danger do you apprehend from it?

Have you had occasion to enforce discipline?

Do you know of any person in your parish who is preparing himself for holy orders?

Are any persons prepared for confirmation?

Of the Condition of the Parish

What is the number of adults?

Does it appear to you to increase?

Do the other religious denominations gain ground among you? And which of them?

Do they increase in consequence of their zeal, or the influx of strangers?

Do union and harmony in religious matters prevail among the parishioners?

What provision is made for the minister? And from what sources?

What is the annual amount of your funds? Do these increase? And by what means?

Have you tried the pew-rent scheme, and with what success? Have you any glebe? Of what does it consist? Is it rented? What does it yield? In what condition is your

church? If the churches and graveyards are out of repair, do you not intend to exert yourselves for repairing them?

Have you a parish library? What use is made of it? Is your parish very large? How many places of worship? Is there occasion for other places of worship therein? Would you prefer to have an additional church under the management of the vestry? Or to have the parish divided? Or to have a distinct cure only?

Is there anything in which the convention can render you assistance? Do you find any defects in the Vestry act? And of what nature are they? Has any clergyman in this, or in any other state, in any respect behaved himself disorderly in your parish, or exercised his functions without obtaining consent from the proper authority?

To be Asked in Vacant Parishes

Do you desire to have a minister settled with you? What can you raise for him? What mode will you adopt?

Does any minister of the Church visit you? Has any minister offered to you his services and who is he? What answer have you given him? When do you expect again to hear from him? Will you give notice to the bishop or the visiting member of his future applications? Is there any person in your parish qualified to act as reader? Any desirous of receiving confirmation?

To be Proposed to the Clergy Only

Is the vestry of your parish careful and diligent in procuring the births, marriages and deaths in the parish, to be entered in their register? Have you complied with the first canon of the General Convention of 1792?[1] Have you furnished the secretary of our convention, with the amount of

[1] Every clergyman shall register his name with the ecclesiastical authority of the diocese.

the several registers required in the 1st and 3rd canons of the Church in Maryland, and 15th of the General Convention of 1789?

Have you prepared any persons for confirmation? Does there appear to you a disposition in the vestry to receive a visit from the Bishop, agreeably to the plan laid down in the first canon of the General Convention of 1795?

In the convention of 1797 the bishop delivered an address which was printed in the Journal. His remarks throw so much light on the working of this scheme, and on the state of the diocese at the time, that we quote rather fully:

BISHOP CLAGGETT'S CONVENTION ADDRESS, 1797.

Reverend and Respected Gentlemen,

I beg leave to inform you, at the opening of this session of convention, that, in consequence of a canon passed last year, empowering the bishop to lay off the *diocese* into as many districts as he thought proper, and to call on some member of the standing committee, in each district so laid off, to assist him in *visiting* the parishes; and also to propound to the different vestries such interrogatories respecting the *conduct of ministers,* the *state of religion,* and the *condition* of the parishes, as the bishop might think proper to be proposed to them; and to require direct answers to these questions in writing, I have laid off the state into seven distinct districts; and drawn up a number of questions grounded on our constitutions and canons, to be proposed by the visiting members of the standing committee. As many copies of these interrogatories were required, I thought it best to have them printed. Some delay was occasioned by the printer, so that I did not obtain them until a little before the last session of our General Assembly; and by some of the members of that body I forwarded those intended for the Eastern Shore; and those

for this shore I forwarded by the first private conveyances that my almost insulated situation presented to me.

I have been grieved to learn that, in some instances, notwithstanding all my care, they have been long on their way.

In your future appointments of the members of the standing committee, it may be of consequence for you to know how I have divided the diocese, and what gentlemen I have commissioned to assist me in visiting each district. My duty also calls upon me to exhibit to you a copy of the questions which I was directed to draw up, which I now lay on your table, and shall proceed to inform you that I have appointed the counties of St. Mary's, Charles, Calvert, and Prince George's, to be the *first district;* that I commissioned the Rev. Mr. *Walter Addison* to be the visiting member of the same; that Mr. *Addison* received his commission willingly, and notified some, if not all the parishes in his district, of his intention to visit them on certain days; that Mr. *Addison,* previously to his visitations, but too late for me to make any other arrangement, before the meeting of this convention, changed his mind, and, by letter addressed to me, resigned his commission. Mr. *Addison* thinks his youth and some other causes will render abortive any exertions, that he can make, in that character, to promote the interest of the Church of Christ.

The counties of Kent and Caroline I have allotted to compose the *second district,* and have commissioned the Rev. Dr. *Keene* to preside therein, as visiting member. Dr. *Keene* has heretofore discharged that important duty with a scrupulous exactness; but he now writes me, that being almost worn out with age, and laboring under a severe and tedious illness, from which he hardly hopes ever to recover, he has been disqualified to visit his district, and he requests me to appoint some other gentleman to that office.

The *third district* is composed of the counties of Anne Arundel and Baltimore, except St. James's parish, and is

placed under the superintendence and care of the Rev. Mr. *Bend;* who has visited almost his entire district, and made his returns to me.

The *fourth district* consists of the parishes in the counties of Talbot and Queen Anne's; and is under the care of the Rev. Dr. *Bowie,* who has informed me by letter that he has been so ill for many months past, as to be, in a great measure, incapacitated for performing even his parochial duties. He has, however, visited a part of his district, and requests that some other gentleman, who has better health, may be appointed in his room.

The *fifth district* comprehends the counties in Cecil and Harford, and St. James's in Baltimore; and in it the Rev. Mr. *Coleman* is appointed the visiting member; who has visited a part of his district, and made his returns.

The *sixth district* contains the parishes in the counties of Frederick, Montgomery, Washington, and Alleghany, and is placed under the superintendence of the Rev. Mr. *Read,* who has informed me by letter, that he shall, with alacrity, do everything in his power to promote the interests of the Church in that quarter; but that the tedious and dangerous illness of his ancient parent has prevented his making a visitation, before the meeting of this convention.

The *seventh district* comprehends the parishes in the counties of Dorchester, Somerset, and Worcester, in which the Rev. Mr. *Kemp* presides, who has fully discharged his duty, and made his returns agreeably to the canon. As it would take up too much of the time of the convention, to consider the whole of the different returns that have been made to me, I shall pay due attention to them; and if anything in them appears to demand the interposition of the standing committee, or of the convention, I shall, as directed by the canon, submit it to their consideration.

The principal object, which the convention of 1796 appears

to have had in view, in making this arrangement, was to give direct efficacy to our rules, respecting discipline, in a manner more energetic, and less offensive, than any heretofore attempted; and at the same time, to exhibit, by the annual returns made by the different members of the standing committee, a comprehensive view of the state of the church, and of its interests temporal and spiritual, for their information and direction. And should the visiting members of the standing committee be punctual in performing the duties required of them, and the different vestries in the diocese heartily cooperate with them, I cannot but flatter myself, that, with the divine blessing, this measure will be followed with the happiest consequences to the church.[1]

We fear the bishop may have been tempted to take as his text for this address, "And they all with one consent began to make excuse." Whether he had as sanguine expectations as his words would make it appear, we cannot say, but the plan worked out far differently than he had evidently hoped.

"Whether they [the vestries] were thus called together to afford them an opportunity to complain," says Dr. Hawks, "is not declared in the canon; that the temptation was a strong one to improve the opportunity to such a purpose is obvious enough; and it is hardly to be doubted, that it was so improved by that class (of whom every congregation affords a specimen) who unfortunately think that God and the Church require of them to be much more watchful over the clergyman, than they are over their own souls. The system was, without question, a bad one. Its direct tendency was to produce unpleasant feelings between the parochial clergy, and such of their brethren as were visitors; and also to sow periodically, the seeds of a plentiful harvest of discord between ministers and their flocks.

"It is not surpising that this scheme met with so little coun-

[1] *Journal of Convention*, 1797, p. 13–16.

tenance from the clergy. In addition to the objections to it already mentioned, they might have found a good reason for opposing it, in the fact that it placed over them, as an ecclesiastical superior, in whose appointment they had no voice, one, who after all, was but their equal in ministerial station; while, at the same time, it tended to lower the elevation of the episcopal office, and certainly diminished the direct communication between the bishop and the members of the Church throughout the diocese."[1]

Unfortunate and unsatisfactory as this system proved, it served one good purpose. The reports that the visiting members submitted to their diocesan are of great value, in that they give contemporaneous accounts and details that probably never would have been preserved for us had the bishop gone about observing things at first hand. Not enough of these reports have been preserved to make a connected history of the diocese for the years the system was in vogue, but the following examples throw considerable light upon ecclesiastical Maryland in Bishop Claggett's time.

[1] Hawks, *Maryland*, p. 319–321.

CHAPTER VIII

CONTEMPORARY VIEWS OF MARYLAND PARISHES

DR. BEND'S REPORT AS VISITING MEMBER.

Balto., *May*, 1796.

Right Rev. & Dear Sir,

As you were not pleased to withdraw, at our last convention, the confidence which you had reposed in me, in commissioning me to visit certain parishes, I proceeded on Sunday, the 20th of June, 1795, to visit St. Margaret's, Westminster. The Rev. Mr. Sykes, the Rector, exchanged duty with me on that day, & I had not an opportunity of conferring with him on the state of the parish. When I arrived at the Chapel, near Curtis's creek, where I was to preach, I found there three of the Vestry, to whom I showed your Commission. From these I learned that the parishioners are not exemplary in attending public worship; information which was very strongly confirmed by the desolate appearance of the Church; but that nevertheless the affairs of the parish rather prosper than decline; that the vestry were out of debt, & able to make good their engagement with their Minister, but that with the best intentions, they were not as active as they might be; that the sectarians in the parish were not very zealous, but that some of them had all the illiberality commonly attendant upon immoderate zeal; that the sacrament of the Lord's supper had not been administered in the parish, during the short time of Mr. Sykes' ministry, but would soon be celebrated, & that there had been no preparation for confirmation; & that no acts of discipline had been exercised since my last visit, or found necessary.

There appeared to me some few repairs necessary to be

made to the Chapel, which the Vestry intend to have effected. There is no fence around the Church, & as the parishioners almost universally bury at home none is thought to be requisite.

I was farther informed, that they intend soon to present a subscription, with a view to raising in time, provision for the further maintenance of their Minister; that altho' they have a register, he keeps no account of baptisms, marriages & funerals; that their minister is very acceptable to the people & exact in the discharge of his ministerial duties. I gave the gentlemen a little necessary advice, & withdrew to celebrate public worship. This was attended with becoming solemnity on the part of the people; among whom I was sorry to perceive no books.

Having agreed to exchange duty with the Rev. Mr. Oliver on the 19th of July, & he wishing me to preach at a Chapel in his parish,[1] I repaired thither, & preached on the day appointed. The congregation, which was very large, consisted of persons of various denominations. One Vestryman was present, from whom I obtained the following information. The Chapel was built by the subscriptions of the parishioners & designed for a Protestant Episcopal Church; but thro' some mistake, the bond of conveyance, instead of designating it thus, barely mentioned a place of public worship; Hence it was thought to be the property of no particular sect, but open to all; & it was accordingly treated. How far the gentleman was right in his information, I know not; nor was I able to determine, whether the vestry of the parish could support any equitable suit for obtaining the exclusive right in the Chapel. It is, I think, a subject which demands the attention of the Convention.

From the same gentleman I learned that the Baptists, Presbyterians, & Methodists were numerous; that they were very

[1] St. Thomas' (Garrison Forest), Baltimore County.

zealous for their own modes of faith; & were not cold in opposing the Church; but I did not find that they were very much in earnest about vital piety. I was sorry to hear that the members of the Church were divided in religious sentiments; Calvinistic opinions have been disseminated amongst them with too much success. To this it may be ascribed in a great degree, that they have foreborne to avail themselves of the ministerial services of Mr. Oliver; & to the same cause we may ascribe it, that the members of the Church in that quarter have suffered it to be insinuated, that they have not an exclusive right in their little chapel.

From what I have said you will readily suppose that they have no regular public worship. Sometimes one, sometimes another, & very seldom anyone preaches to them. There are no communicants among them; they have made no preparation for confirmation; their children are baptized by any minister, who preaches in the neighborhood, & some are left without baptism. The Chapel was never finished, yet it has stood so long that it wants repairs. A subscription was busily circulated, while I was there, to raise money for repairing & finishing the Chapel, & enclosing their graveyard, consisting of two acres. Few persons are buried in it.

I was affectingly convinced of the little attachment they have for the Church, by the total ignorance which they showed, as to postures; by the total want of prayer-books among them; and by there being neither prayer-book nor bible in the desk. Pulpit they have none.

On, Sunday, the 6th of December, an opportunity was afforded me of visiting the Elkridge parish. The day was fine, & I had taken pains to have notice of my intention to preach considerably spread; but I had the sorrow to find the people in that parish as much averse from giving the Sunday to religious exercises, as any other day. Twice as I rode to the Church I passed by negroes cutting wood; in

one case the negroes of a wealthy man in that ancient settlement. The people in Queen Caroline still seem, as if they desired to live without God in the world; & I confess that I see no prospect of a change for the better. It is mortifying to encounter the heat of the summer and the cold of the winter in a long ride of 17 miles; to preach in an empty Church, which the very bats have deserted, & is constantly nodding to its fall. I have the testimony of my own conscience that I have used great exertions to induce them to raise the Church from their ruins, & to settle a minister among them, & were there any hopes of success, I would cheerfully continue my efforts to extricate them from their present disgraceful state. I submit to you, whether it will not be proper to leave them to themselves, till they show infallible signs of contrition & reformation. At any rate I must beg you to release me from the drudgery & heartfelt pain of visiting the parish; or, if it be compatible with your ideas, to put, in this case, some other clergyman in the visitatorial office. This is the first time I have thus expressed myself to you; yet have I thought proper to express myself thus earnestly.

I have since these visits, made several fruitless efforts to visit again Queen Margaret's[1] & St. Thomas's.

To this representation I have only to add, that the state of my own parish[2] is flourishing; & that I hope soon to call upon you to consecrate another building to the service of God.

I remain, Right Rev. & dear Sir, With due respect,

Your affectionate,

Joseph G. J. Bend.

[1] He evidently means either St. Margaret's or Queen Caroline.
[2] St. Paul's, Baltimore.

DR. BEND'S REPORT AS VISITING MEMBER.

Balto. *June* 7, 1797.

Right Rev. & Dear Sir,

In obedience to your appointment, I set off, on Sunday, the 28th May, to visit the Third District of Maryland. I preached on that day, in the morning, at the parish Church of the Rev. Mr. Duke, Rector of St. Margaret's, Westminster, Anne Arundel County. Mr. Duke was doing my duty in this city; and there was not a Vestryman or warden present. I could therefore obtain no information concerning the conduct of the minister, or the state of the parish. In respect to the former, his character is known to be irreproachable; in respect to the latter, I believe it to be pretty much as stated to you in the communication which I had the honor to address to you last year.

Not knowing that I should interfere with any established usage, I had appointed to preach in the afternoon of the same day in St. Anne's Church, Annapolis. Upon this Rev. Mr. Higginbotham put his negative; because it was not customary, & he wished no innovations made in the rules which he observed with his parishioners; & because he has refused permission to yourself some time since to preach in the afternoon in his Church, I appointed to meet him & his Vestry at half-past six o'clock; but as they did not come, prevented probably by something unforeseen, & as I had to ride nine miles, I left Annapolis at 7 o'clock, without seeing them.

On Monday, the 29th, I preached in All Hallows, at the parish Church. There I found Rev. Mr. Moscross & three of the Vestry. I put to them the questions prescribed by you & received as answers from the Vestry, that they did not know whether the minister explained to the people the Liturgy or prepared children & others for confirmation, or makes out the necessary registers; but that he baptizes children, & regu-

larly administers the Lord's supper; nor does he admit to the Sacrament improper characters, or behave himself in a disorderly, scandalous, or immoral manner.

From the Minister & Vestry conjointly addressed, I learned that the number of communicants had increased, & that several persons had been prepared for confirmation; that they knew no person preparing for Holy Orders, nor had they had occasion to enforce discipline; & that as they apprehended no danger from infidelity, so, on the other hand, virtue & piety did not seem to gain ground among them.

I learned further that they knew not the number of adults in the parish, although it appeared to them to increase; that other religious denominations do not gain ground; that their funds, which arise only from glebe-rent & subscription, do not increase; that there is no occasion for other places of worship in the parish; there being a free school, which if preached in, would supercede the necessity; that they had not perceived any defects in the Vestry act; that they knew of nothing in which the Convention could assist them; & that there has been no irregularity committed in the parish by any clergyman; that harmony & union prevailed among the parishioners; that the pew rent scheme had never been tried; that they intend to exert themselves to repair their Church & inclosures; & that there are the remains of a parish library scattered among the parishioners; & that their glebe, on which there is a house out of repair, & which consists of 160 acres, rents for £41.

From the minister I learned that the Vestry did not appear very diligent about the register required of them; that he himself had complied with the first canon of the G. Convention of 1792, & furnished the Secretary with the amount of the registers, which the clergy are required to keep; that he had prepared persons for confirmation, & that the Vestry would have been happy to have the Bishop long ago among them.

On Tuesday, the 30th, I preached at the parish Church of St. James's where I met the Rev. Mr. Compton, the Rector, & five Vestrymen. Many of the questions, which I put, could not be answered, because of the short time during which Mr. C. had been in the parish, & to many such answers were given, as I have recorded above. The following being different I shall repeat to you; that the minister diligently performs his duty, that the number of communicants is not so great as a few years since, but that virtue & piety are increasing at present; that they have one glebe of 100 acres in the tenure of Mr. Compton, & another of 515, surveyed for 715, which they rent for £70; that they have a subscription of £5; & that they have employed Counsel to sue for the 200 acres of land, out of which they are kept; that these funds are rather greater than formerly; that they have unsuccessfully tried the pew rent scheme; that their small library is partially dispersed, partly in the Vestry-house; & that certain defects in the Vestry act have occurred to them, which they formerly addressed to the Committee appointed to petition for alteration.

From Mr. Compton I learned that the Vestry kept up their register; that he had not complied with the first canon of the G. C. of 1792; that he had sometimes transmitted to the Secretary the amounts of the registers required of him; & that the Vestry would be happy to see the Bishop when he himself should be ready for them.

Not having yet been able to visit Queen Caroline Parish, I must here subscribe myself, &c., &c.,

Joseph G. J. Bend.

DR. BEND'S REPORT AS VISITING MEMBER.

Right Rev. & Dear Sir, Balto., *June* 1, 1798.

On Friday, the 11th of May, I set off on the Visitation of the District committed to me, & preached in St. Margaret's, Westminster, to a small congregation. There was

not a Vestry; but from some of the members present, I learned, that except the present vacancy of the parish, its affairs were much the same as they were last year, for an account of which I refer you to my report of last year.

On the 12th I preached in Queen Caroline Parish to about 50 persons; & the Church being very crazy, we assembled in the house of Dr. Coale. The same melancholy appearance still prevails in this parish. They have no Vestry; there appears little sense of religious obligation in the bulk of the parishioners; & I see no prospect, that there will ever be another Church raised, & a Clergyman settled in the parish.

On the 13th, I preached at Annapolis, where the congregation was by no means proportioned to the size of the Church. As the Rev. Mr. Higginbotham had forgotten to convene his Vestry, I had no opportunity of learning precisely the state of his parish; but I believe, that the evils which infest country parishes, prevail in a considerable degree even in the Metropolis.

On the 14th, I visited St. James's, where I found a very small congregation. As you had been there so recently, I only addressed to Mr. Compton the queries designed for the Clergy; & from him I learned, in answer to the 5th question, that the Vestry would probably send me their quota towards defraying the expenses of the Bishop & will always be glad to see him in their parish.

On the 15th, I preached to a pretty full Church in All Hallows, which is now vacant. In all other respects, the parish is as it was last year. The Vestry seem well disposed & are anxious to obtain a Minister; for whom, they say, including the rent of the glebe, they will be able to raise at least £150; at the most £200 per annum.

I appointed the 28th instant for visiting St. Thomas's; but the incessant rain on that day prevented my going.

I remain, &c., &c.,

Joseph G. J. Bend.

CONDITION IN ST. PETER'S, TALBOT CO., FROM THE VISITING COMMITTEE'S REPORT, 1797.

The Parish is large and till lately we had a Chapel, but as the Part of the Parish in which it stood would not contribute to the support of the Minister, those who did would not agree that he should officiate in it. Six or seven years back the Vestry hearing that it was abased to vile purposes, adjourned to meet at it the next Vestry day and advertised the neighborhood of the Meetings,—and that if they would contribute to keep it in order and employ a Minister, both should be done. The doors of the Chapel were found to have been let stand open, & that horses & cattle had sheltered in it—also from Joiner's Shavings & Chips lying in it, it was seen that it had been used as a work-shop. The roof was in bad condition, the walls much cracked, the windows broken, the floor damaged, but the pew work in a tolerable good state of preservation—on the pulpit writen with chalk—Alass poor Parson—the Vestry, finding the Chapel in the order described, and the neighbors not attending except two, who said they came from mere Curiosity & had nothing to propose, talked about the improbability of its being repaired, & again preached in, and that the inside work would answer for one at Easton (which a Subscription was then in hand to procure the building of) the consequence was that in a little time the neighborhood began to pull the Inside of it to pieces,—and parts of it were to be seen dispersed about, as covers for Goose Pens & Chicken Coops, as Scaffoldings for new Buildings & a Store was said to be fitted up with Shelves &c out of it; as soon as the breaking up was known of, a written complaint was made to the County Court, & by the Court was delivered to the Prosecutor—nothing was ever done, & at present so total destruction has been made, that not the least appearance of the Chapel remains.

We cannot give proper support to one minister, nor repair

our Parish Church. Divine service is performed at Easton in the Court House, & we see no probability of being able to build a Church or a Chapel there.

REPORT OF VISITOR TO ST. PETER'S, MONTGOMERY CO. HAGERSTOWN AND FREDERICK.

June 2, 1800.

Right Reverend Sir,

I set out on Sunday the 11th May on a Visit thro' the District assigned me. On the same day I preached at St. Peter's Church to a large audience, well behaved, except a few. The Vestry informed me that their Minister, Mr. Scott, has behaved himself soberly, discreetly, & with propriety since he came into the Parish. His salary at that Place 85 Ls. The Church much in the same state as when you was there, except a Gallery built since. They informed me that union & harmony, in religious matters prevailed among the Parishioners more than formerly.

On Thursday, 15th, I preached at Hager's Town to only 13 Whites, 7 Blacks. Religion there cold, & at a low ebb, indeed. Mr. Bower informed me he had given previous notice, accordingly, as I had requested by letter. The Church in the same State as two years ago, they have made a beginning to inclose the Church-yard with Post & Rail. The Vestry did not attend, except one member, consequently no Interrogatories proposed, Mr. Bower's Salary 250 Ls from Pew rent and Subscription.

On Sunday, 18th, preached at Frederick Town to a small audience, mostly young men & boys. Religion there as cold & dead, if not more so, than Hager's Town, considering I preached there on Sunday, & at H. Town on a week day. They have no Vestry there & not likely to have any, & I believe was it not for our friend, Mr. William Beall, the Church w'd be extinct there. The house in a most ruinous

state, & destitute of common cleanliness. They have repaired the wall around the Church-Yard. Mr. Bower preaches there every other Sunday.

As to my own Parish, we have a legal Vestry who attend to their duty very well, in most instances. But am sorry to inform you that our Churches are not in so good repair as I could wish, and do not know when we shall have them better. I attend three Congregations, which, generally, are pretty full & devout. We have a Glebe that rents for 25 Ls pr. annum. We have no Library, except the Church books. My salary very moderate, the exact sum I do not know, the Vestry have agreed to give me what they can get subscribed, which I believe will not be immense. The District has never deposited one farthing in my hands for the purpose of defraying the Bishop's expenses, except 30/6 that was collected in St. Peter's the day I preached there, the 11 May. It appears to me, that the visiting members are looked on as spies & in search of money, which may be the principal cause I had so few hearers in H. & F. Towns, as I have reasons to believe they expected collections were to be made.

I find it to be a disagreeable business; and as I am advanced in Years, & am obliged to attend to a farm for the support of my Family, wish to resign the commission you was pleased to favor me with, and to be no longer considered as a member of the Standing Committee.

I am, &c., &c.,

Thomas Read.

REPORT OF DR. KEMP.

May 10, 1805.

In this [Dorchester] Parish they have never chosen a vestry under the late act. Nor indeed do they pay any regard to the condition of their parish. The parish church and one of the chapels are in a state of ruin. Still there are a

good many persons well disposed towards our church and when I visit them I am generally attended by considerable congregations. Notwithstanding the long time that this parish has been without a minister I have little doubt an industrious and popular clergyman would be able to retrieve its affairs and probably obtain a tolerable salary. JAMES KEMP.

REPORT OF VISITOR TO QUEEN ANNE'S, KENT AND CECIL COUNTIES.

May 16 1808.

RT. REV'D. SIR,

The want of money to defray my expences deprives me of the pleasure of meeting you in Baltimore. Until this morning I cherished the hope of going; but the last string of my bow is now broken & I must stay at home.

As I am disappointed in my expectation of delivering to you in person a detailed report of the state of the 5th district, I take the opportunity of sending you an abstract of it by post.

Queen Anne's County.

St. John's & Christ-Church Parishes are vacant, & have been so for many years. They contain very few episcopalians. The people are divided between Nothingonians and Methodists.

In St. Paul's parish, the schism, which I informed you at Croome, had been made by two Dashiellitish vestrymen, has been apparently healed. The vestry has, at a late meeting, unanimously re-elected Mr. Reynolds; & he has accepted. This minister appears to do his duty faithfully. The size of the congregations has considerably increased within two years. The number of communicants about 30.

Kent County.

In St. Paul's parish no change has taken place since you visited it last summer, except the revival of the associations

formerly established by Mr. Dashiell. The inside of the church is still unfinished. But as soon as Buonaparte takes off our embargo the vestry will, I have no doubt, compleat the work. The congregation is large and respectable. Communicants about 60. Mr. Wilmer intends immediately after our convention to remove to New Jersey. If you obtain Mr. Dunn & establish him in this parish he will I believe be very acceptable to the great body of the people.

In Chester parish the vestry has withdrawn the services of the rector from the parish or country church, & obliged him to officiate every day in town. The country church indeed is much out of order, & the people around it not much disposed to place it in a better condition. But I think it wrong that one-half of the parish should thus be surrendered to the Methodists & the devil. Permit me to recommend that, when you pass through Chestertown in June, you give your opinion & your advice on this subject to some of the vestrymen. The abandonment of the one church has not, I am told, sensibly increased the size of the congregation in the other, notwithstanding the fair character & respectable talents of the rector. This circumstance proves that this act of the vestry is very displeasing to the country people. The association about which Mr. Wm. Wilmer wrote to you, is now under the control of Dr. Kewley who has established a form of prayer & permits no person to officiate except himself. I have advised him to assemble the members in the church, instead of a private house. As there is now no room for the gratification of vanity, & the display of spiritual gifts, I fear that the society will not soon attain its former eminence.

Shrewsbury parish remains in the torpid state to which it was reduced by the nonministration of Mr. Wilmer. In this large & populous parish there is only one male, & eleven female communicants; & not a single person, male or female, who makes responses in church; though some of the females

still retain the good old fashion of kneeling during the prayers. The vestry last year raised nearly 2,000 dollars by lottery for the purpose of repairing the old church, & finishing the new chapel. But the money has not been collected; & I have hitherto found it impracticable to collect the members of the vestry since the last election. I have three times requested a meeting, but have been as often disappointed. On next Saturday I shall see the issue of another attempt. I officiate in this parish once in three weeks, & Mr. W. Wilmer twice in the same period. As soon as I shall obtain a meeting of the vestry, I shall urge them to collect their money, & commence the repairs of the churches. Until this be done, it would be useless for them to employ a minister.

Cecil County.

St. Stephen's parish is, I believe, in a better condition than I found it, & better than you saw it 15 years ago. But it is extremely difficult to raise a parish which has been for 20 years in the hands of ignorant or profligate ministers. Any man in orders can break down a parish. But very few, even of the good, are capable of building one up. The number usually found at church is from one to two hundred. The communicants only 17. I have reason to believe that a much larger number wishes to receive confirmation.

St. Augustine's parish has been for many years destitute of a ministry. It does not contain more than 20 episcopal families. The rest are Methodists and Painites. For 7 or 8 months in a year I officiate in this church once in 3 weeks.

St. Mary Anne parish is again vacant. Mr. Hardy removed from it this spring to Joppa in Harford. He had conducted himself in such a manner as to be greatly respected by the people; and his departure is much regretted by all serious persons. It was, however, necessary to go away, for

his salary was not equal to the expenses of his family. During his stay he had fully doubled the size of the congregation at the old parish church, & raised a new one at Battle Swamp, a place about 15 miles from Northeast. This was done without exhibiting any sign of fanaticism, without violating any canon or rubric, without slandering the body of the clergy, and without preaching a single article of the new doctrines.

I am Rt. Rev'd Sir with great respect, &c., &c.,

H. L. Davis.

REPORT OF THE REV. JOHN COLEMAN.

Harford County, *May* 16th, 1808

Right Rev^d^ Sir,

Indisposition prevented my attendance last Convention. It was not without difficulty that I attended in 1806. But unwilling to discontinue or abate my labours, I continued (tho' in great weakness and some pain) regularly to perform my parochial duties till the 16th Nov. when I was taken ill at a Fun'l on the manor and was obliged to desist. From experience I find it would have been better had I stopped sooner. For near 12 months I was confined to my house tho' not I believe one whole day to my bed. I appointed a Rector and had some thoughts of resigning the rectorship of St. James' and promised it to some of the vestry who came to see me, but they wished to wait at least till the spring hoping I would again be able to attend. The Rev. Mr. Allen was kind enough to visit me and both my churches in the time of my affliction.

Since I resigned the rectorship of St. James' in Dec. 1804 I have divided my time between St. James' and the new church called Christ Church. One of the vestry dying and another removing to Virginia the church is not yet finished. We assemble in private houses and I have attended regularly

since last Septr. Occasionally I have attended St. James' and administered the sacrament twice since Nov. last. On Easter Sunday last I recommenced my usual attendance and thanks to kind Providence I have been able to attend regularly since & perform the duties of my office in both churches. . . .

The Parish is large. The congregations attend well and behave decently. Family worship is set up in some houses but there is too much neglect in this duty. Since my entrance into the parish more than 20 years ago the church has been repaired several times, but needs repairs at present, which are contemplated by the vestry and might readily be effected by a combined effort. But contributions to the support of the church are generally partial & fall upon a few. Catechising is not common. About 30 have been confirmed some years ago and more are preparing for it.

The vestry act with candor and friendship and pay punctually what they engage. The mode adopted is that of subscription. They sometimes raise £100 but often fall far short of that sum of which they candidly give me due notice. Conventional requisitions have not been regularly attended to but probably they will be in future. The congregation at the new church is small but attend regularly. It will increase it is presumed when the church is finished and fully organized. Number of adults not ascertained. Communicants about 50. 1806. Baptisms 45. Marriages 8. Funerals 12. 1807. Baptisms 17. Mar. — Funerals 7.

The register which I have kept since I first entered as Rector of St. James' Parish, the Baptisms entered (including those in St. John's 10 years, St. Thomas' 5 years & 7 months to which I made returns on resigning the rectorship) are 1818 Infants and adults, of which 229 Blacks. . . . .

Since Apl. 1804, I have rec'd of the vestry of St. James' £225. JOHN COLEMAN.

REPORT OF THE REV. BENJAMIN CONTEE.

[No. date. 1808 or '09.]

The Visiting Member of the first district of the Diocese of Maryland commends his duty and high respects to the Rt. Rev. Thomas John Claggett, D. D., Bishop of Maryland, & begs leave to report: that two out of four of the parishes in St. Mary's County are still vacant & that there appears to be little or no prospect of their being supplied shortly; that King and Queen began a subscription for support of a minister last fall; but a disagreement among the subscribers arising the attempt ceased; that St. Andrew's does not seem lately to have been in any state of activity to concert measures to obtain a minister; that William & Mary (St. Mary's) is under the Rev. F. Barclay's care as its rector; and that All faith is filled by the Rev. G. Ralph, who intimated to the visiting member last week that the vestry and himself were desirous of his being instituted as Rector of All faith, which desire it was his intention to communicate & to pray him to have it carried into effect.

William & Mary, Charles, is occupied by the visiting member; & Trinity is under his care, by convention between the vestries of the two parishes. Rev. Jno. Weems is still the rector of Porto. parish but Durham parish unfortunately it is apprehended is yet without a rector. Some measures were in agitation by the Vestry of Durham to engage the Rev. Mr. Duncan to be their spiritual guide, but they were not effectuated when the v. m. last had information from that parish, (in February). Nothing has been heard very lately from Washington parish, Columbia, the v. m. lately addressed the rector, enclosing to him a note to the vestry. . . . A similar note was sent to the vestries of the respective parishes in the 1st District & on Sunday last the v. m. met the vestry & congregation of King and Queen at their parish church; after evening service and a sermon he conferred with the

vestry who agreed to hold a conference on the Thursday following on the heads communicated in the note of the v. m. At present the v. m. is uninformed of the result or of what has been done by any of the parishes in the business of the note forwarded to them, except Wm. & Mary which has complied. All of which is respectfully submitted by

B. Contee.

THE REV. DR. CONTEE TO BISHOP CLAGGETT.

Charles County, Wednesday, 29th *May*, 1811.

Right Reverend Father in God:

A wish to do the congregations some service, and to preserve some of their unsupplied parishes in the privileges of church membership, induced me to send out several Notices that my personal attendance would be given in several of the vacant parishes within your Diocese. And this too, I had no doubt would be far from being disagreeable to you. Altho' an ill-judged, perhaps, repeal of the 15th Can. of the Convention of the Church under your immediate superintendence had taken away the power from the Episcopate of inspecting into the condition of the congregations by substitutionary Functionaries—and altho' (in consequence of the repeal of s^{d} Can.) I have nothing now, in command from you on this subject. It is a subject, I am persuaded, near your heart, and I have striven to promote it by bringing into action some of my small Energies; by divine permission, and have endeavored with too little success, to surmount the languor I have been so deplorably thrown into. . . .

Sir, on Friday morning last I went from home to King & Queen parish Church, 19 miles distant, to meet my appointment there at two o'clock in the afternoon, to perform evening prayer & dispense the sacraments. This I did, but I was mortified to find both fewer children brought forw'd and that fewer comm'ts came forward than I expected—the

number which came to either sacrament did not exceed 12—several of the dead in the burial ground had not had their remains respected by the sepultural rite—this was also solemnized—Hearing from some source not necessary to detail here that a vestry had not been chosen at Easter it was consented that I s'd give notice for a meeting of the parishioners, on Monday, in Whitsunweek, to elect a vestry for the current year. This was done. I took a further liberty of urging the expediency of having a lay delegate sent to the approaching convention at Balto, & moreover the present reader at that Church told me he w'd go, if chosen—this information I gave to one of the last year's and of the still existing vestry.

On Saturday, 10, in the forenoon, I repaired to All Faith Church to read prayers and to administer the sacraments—6 or 8 were baptized—40 communicated. Here I saw the reader who was a communicant & intends to make application to you, rt. rev'd Sir, for the Lay'g on of your hands in the holy ordinance of instituting Deacons. He gave me his letter to the Standing Committee. A Mr. A. Keech was likewise at this Church: having heard of his intention to apply for holy orders & supposing it likely he w'd come to the Sacrament of the blessed supper—I asked if such was his intention & whether he had ever before yielded this unequivocal Symptom of his cordial acceptance of Xt^{s} offers of atoning Mercy—his answer to the 1st was in the affirmative, to the last question in the negative—Wherefore as directed by Can: I found it my duty to ask other questions, tending toward a knowledge of the impressions he was under of the solemnity of the duty about to be engaged in—after which he communicated—his application was not in a train of preparation to be forwarded, but he expressed a desire to complete it, in time for the next expected session of the Standing Committee. . . .

In the afternoon, 3 o'clock, I reached Trinity Chapel, Charles County, baptized 3 or 4 children after prayers, but with a small congregation & proceeded upwards to be neare St. Pauls in Prince George's County where I appointed to be Sunday (10 A. M.) Met there at the hour on Sunday morning, went thro' the morning service, & intended to baptize after 2d Lesson, but there not being any water at hand postponed it till after Sermon—unexpectedly I was engaged in this last service—I thought I had given similar notifications to those which had been sent to the three other before mentioned congregations, but it appeared I had not, & I was in a measure compelled to adopt the poor amends of poor preaching, at this last Church—but as a more ample recompense for the fault of omitting to give notice that on this day y^e^ Lord's Supper w'd be celebrated here, I have notified my intention, by divine grace, of doing it there that day 3 weeks. . . . Y^r^ aff^e^ & true friend & Serv^t^

B. Contee.

CHAPTER IX

THE BISHOP AT WORK

In the year 1803 the members of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Delaware, in annual convention, unanimously resolved that it was their wish to have the state of Delaware added to the diocese of the bishop of Maryland, that they might have the benefit of his episcopal visitations, and also resolved that when it was deemed expedient by the Church of Maryland, their convention would cheerfully join in electing a bishop for the eastern shore of Maryland and the state of Delaware. The Rev. William Pryce, of Trinity Church, Wilmington, was appointed to carry this matter before the Maryland Church at its next convention to be held in Baltimore.

The following year Mr. Pryce reported to his convention that he had met his Maryland brethren in June preceding, that he was received with attention and politeness, but that the convention of that state deemed an union of the two dioceses, at that time, premature and inexpedient. He further stated that he had waited on Bishop Claggett, had been received by him in a very friendly and affectionate manner, and that the bishop had promised to visit the congregations to which he might be invited as often as his extensive duties, ill health, and declining years would permit.

The Delaware convention thereupon passed an unanimous resolution requesting the Bishop of Maryland to make their churches a part of his diocese and to perform all such episcopal duties as he might deem conducive to the interests and prosperity of the Church in Delaware. In 1805 the Delaware convention invited Bishop Claggett to open the next con-

vention with a sermon, but he did not do this, nor do we find that the bishop ever performed very extensive ministrations in that state. With advancing age and feeble health he already had a field larger than he had strength to administer.

That Bishop Claggett would gladly have assisted his neighboring brethren if he could possibly have done so cannot be doubted by those who know his interest and zeal in missionary enterprises. We have no earlier evidence that the face of the Church was turned toward the West than in the following interesting "Testimonium" of the Rev. William Duke, which this gentleman received from the Maryland church in 1789. The paper is in the handwriting of Dr. Claggett, written three years before he became a bishop.

THE REV. WILLIAM DUKE'S TESTIMONIUM.

To all & every the Professors of the Protestant Episcopal Church Inhabiting Kentucky Government to whom these Presents shall come.

The Convention of y^{e} Protestant Episcopal Church send Greeting. Know ye that we y^{e} Convention of the s^{d} Church taking into our serious Consideration the present State of y^{e} numerous Professors of our Religion in those extensive Regions which lie beyond y^{e} Apelachian Mountains destitute as we understand they are, in most Places of regular Ministers to administer y^{e} Sacraments & preach y^{e} word of God as in our Church; and being anxiously desirous as far as we have ability to defuse y^{e} knowledge & worship of Almighty God, & to promote rational Religion, Virtue & Learning in y^{e} World; And whereas our well beloved Bro^{r} in X^{t} the Rev^{d} Mr. W^{m} Duke Clerk has notified unto us his laudable Intention of emigrating into that Country for these great Purposes we beg leave to recommend him the said W^{m} Duke to your favorable Reception & to request you to assist him in y^{e} Discharge

of his Office so long as he may continue among you & we do assure you that he has been regularly & canonically ordained & y^t^ he has behaved himself as a good & faithful Minister of y^e^ Gospel of Jesus X^t^ as far as has ever come to our knowledge & we verily believe him to be well skilled in Divinity & in y^e^ Latin, Greek, & Hebrew Languages.

In Testimony whereof we have hereunto set our hands this — day of June in y^e^ Year of our Lord, 1789.[1]

Duke set out on this important mission, and crossed the mountains beyond Harper's Ferry, but ill health compelled him to return. Maryland, nevertheless, seems to have been the first diocese to support a missionary, for as early as 1798 the Rev. Samuel Keene, Jr., was appointed missionary to Kentucky, where he labored successfully for a number of years until he was obliged to return because of ill health. The results of this good beginning were largely lost, for the church did not follow up the work begun by this worthy man. The lamentable state of affairs in the next decade is suggested in a letter, dated February 14, 1814, from the Rev. Daniel Stephens, a Maryland clergyman, to Bishop Claggett, of which the following is an extract:

"When we consider the vast extent of territory and increasing population beyond the Alleghany mountains, it must grieve the heart of an Episcopalian to think that we have hardly one solitary church in all those states and territories; whilst other sectaries are doing all in their power to proselytize the people. If only one clergyman could get into some of their largest Towns, he might do much good, not only by preaching, but by disseminating books. And another good method would be, for some healthy young ministers to itinerate for two or three years, if they could be supported.

[1] No reference to this document is found in the Journals of Convention. This is most probably a preliminary draft from which the final copy was drawn, as the signatures are not attached, and the composition, by its erasures and insertions, does not appear likely to have been the copy intended for presentation.

And even if a Bishop could be constitutionally sent, it might be of great advantage in rendering ordinations, and studies connected therewith, more easily obtained. Our church is certainly wanting in zeal on this subject. The Church of England has lately sent a Bishop to the East Indies, and the Catholics have lately sent one (Mr. Dubourg of Balt.) to New Orleans; but we have done nothing; our sheep in the wilderness are wandering without a shepherd, and starving for lack of knowledge! There were indeed some efforts made between the years of '92 and '95, by the general convention of New York and Philad. with Dr. Smith at their head (which you will recollect) for sending some itinerant ministers to the western frontier, but they failed for want of funds and proper encouragement. . . ."

In the meantime the good bishop was striving zealously to uphold the ministrations of the church in his own diocese, and enlightening glimpses of his activities are to be found in certain extant journals and convention addresses, which have, so far as we know, not been published heretofore.

The following interesting account of the bishop's visitation on the eastern shore in 1803 is taken from a manuscript in the hand of the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Contee, and was undoubtedly composed by that gentleman, who was a warm personal friend of the bishop, and whom the latter enjoyed as a traveling companion. Besides, it was necessary, owing to the bishop's poor health, for some well-known and acceptable clergyman to accompany him, and to assist by preaching on those occasions when the bishop's strength would not permit him to carry the burden of the entire service.

JOURNAL OF BISHOP CLAGGETT'S VISITATION TO THE EASTERN SHORE.

EASTON, 23rd *July*, 1803.

Set out from Croom on the 7th July, 1803, and by appointment fell in with B. Contee at Nottingham on Patuxent,

after dinner crossed the river and proceeded to the house of J. Chew, Esqr. on the Bay side in Calvert county; lodged there & and the next day sent to Herring Bay to look for the arrival of Col. Hadaway's boat—it was there in waiting—the indisposition of the Bishop detained him & Mr. C. all that day at Mr. Chew's—early the next morning took horse to go to the boat at Herring Bay—missed of it, but returning down along the beach of the Chesapeake found the boat at anchor near the mouth of fishing Creek, went on board and made sail for Hadaway's—arrived safe—after dinner took the stage for Easton—got there in the evening. On the 10th Sunday a new Church at Easton was consecrated by the Bishop, and styled Christ Church, the chapel of St. Peter's parish in Talbot county & diocese of Maryland. A confirmation of about 20 persons was held.

Left Easton on Monday (11th) arrived at Cambridge in Dorchester County accompanied by the Rev. Dr. Kemp & Dr. Gardiner. 12th a confirmation of 17 persons was held in the Church at Cambridge, a sermon in the forenoon by the Bishop, in the afternoon by B. C., in the evening by Dr. Gardiner. 13th, accompanied by Dr. Gardiner and B. C. set out for Somerset. Lodged at a Mr. Dashiell's—notice that sermon & confirmation would be at Green Hill Church on 15th. 14th, went to the house of G. Robertson, Esq., Wicommico lower ferry, remained there untill next day. Dr. Gardiner left us, went to Church, morning service by B. C., sermon by the Bishop—confirmation of 17 persons, returned after Church and dined at Mr. Robertson's. Set out from there early in the morning of 16th. Breakfasted at Princess Ann, dined at Mrs. Jackson's, Back Creek, went to Littleton Dennis's, Esqr. at Pocomoke & lodged. The 17th (Sunday) joined by Dr. Gardiner, went to Rehoboth Church, it was consecrated by the Bishop, a sermon by him and a confirmation of 36 persons. 18th went to Annemesseck Chapel—sermon by the Bishop

and confirmation of 20 persons; dined at Mr. Conner's, drank tea at Mr. Williams', lodged at Mr. Dennis's. 19th, went to dividing Creek Chapel, sermon by the Bishop, and confirmation of [number left blank] persons. Dined at Capt. Waters' and lodged there. 20th, went to Princess Ann, church there, sermon by the Bishop, & confirmation of 70 persons, dined at Mr. Tiegles' crossed Wicommico & lodged at Mr. Robertson's. 21, set out for the Rev. Mr. Jackson's Church, lodged at Major Worgaman's on Choptank, crossed the river, on 22nd from his landing, arrived at the Rev. Mr. Jackson's Church, which was consecrated by the title of St. Peter's Church in St. Peter's parish, Talbot County, Diocese of Maryland. Sermon by the Bishop and confirmation of 21 persons.

At all of the before mentioned churches and chapels the holy supper was administered except at St. Peter's Church. Went from St. Peter's to the house of John Singleton, esq., lodged there. 23rd, after breakfast went to Easton, dined at R. Hammond, Esqrs. After dinner the Bishop accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Barclay & Mr. Hammersly left for Queen Anne's County on a visitation and there B. C. with great regret remained behind and was impelled by the great desire he had to see his family & to return to his duties in Wm. & Mary & conformably to appointment to part with the right rev. Dr. Claggett and deny himself the honor of accompanying and waiting on the Bishop any further, but it was by the Bishop's permission.

Before this brief and imperfect journal is closed it will be proper briefly to recite that the Bishop was everywhere received with great & cordial respect & that his services & addresses were received and regarded with marked and fixed attention—the congregations were numerous at all of the churches, except Green Hill, when the notice was very short & the Rector absent.

The difficulties of travel and the uncertainty of meeting appointments can better be appreciated after reading the following extract from a letter in which the bishop explains to Mr. Kemp why he failed to keep an appointment:

ANNAPOLIS, *Dec^r* 7, 1797.

REV^D & VERY DEAR SIR,

. . . The causes that have operated to prevent my attending the Committee in Cambridge were these, viz. The boat I had bespoke to carry me to your house y^e Thursday before the intended meeting was driven from her station near the Clifts in Calvert County by a violent Gale of Wind w^cn happened the day before & her owners when I arrived there on Thursday informed me they expected she was lost. I then sent my Serv^t up the Bay in search of a boat. He did not return until Saturday; he informed me he had procured a boat then lying in Herring Creek w^ch would sail with me on Sunday morning. I rode up y^e bay to her & with three negro lads to navigate her I embarked on Sunday morning late we had not proceeded far down Herring Bay before we ran aground & were there detained a considerable time, the wind was not fair & before we could get to the mouth of Herring Bay it blowed so violently as to oblige me to stop. It continued to rage all the night & y^e next day—having then no chance of arriving at Cambridge in time I was obliged reluctantly to desist from y^e Enterprize. I know you must have been much disappointed at my absence & I sincerely lament it, but I cannot command y^e wind & y^e waves. I must put off my intended visitation to your District untill next Spring as the time of sailing is now hazardous. . . .

Your affectionate friend & brother,

THO^S JN^O CLAGGETT.

It has been thought strange that Bishop Claggett settled in the little parish at Croom, and remained there the rest of

his days, when it would seem more natural for the bishop of the diocese to have been the incumbent of one of the more prominent and influential city churches. The reason for this is most plainly set forth in the bishop's own words, in a letter to his friend, Dr. Bend, Dec. 23, 1805.

TO THE REV. DR. BEND.

". . . . The next thing in order in your Letter (for I suppose you desire an answer to y^e^ whole of it) is your kind inquiries concerning y^e^ state of my health. Your wishes that I had followed your former advice given me, viz.: had sold some of my unproductive lands & vested y^e^ proceeds in Baltimore & settled myself in your City adding your assurance that such a step would have prolonged my life & added to y^e^ respectability & comfort of it, you then ask very emphatically, is it too late now? & immediately subjoin a long list of candidates for y^e^ present vacancy in your parish. Taking these paragraphs all together what Construction am I to put on them? Does my friend wish to see me droll out a useless & inactive existence in y^e^ City of Baltimore while my powers of mind & body are possessed by me, when laborers in our Vineyard are so much wanted? Does he think that such a kind of conduct would add to the respectability of a Christian Bp. or to his comfort here or hereafter? This cannot be his meaning. Does he then wish me to empower him to add my name to y^e^ long & very respectable list of candidates w^ch^ he has favored me with? No, certainly, this cannot be his meaning. He knows too well what belongs to y^e^ Episcopal Character to wish to see a Bp. & the Bp. of his own diocese too, electioneering with his own clergy either in y^e^ pulpitt of St. Paul's Parish or in y^e^ streets of Baltimore. What then is his meaning? I am weary of conjectures. My friend must desire to have me near him: he must wish too that I may somehow or other be employed in y^e^ duties of my sacred call-

ing or else I cannot see how my residence in Baltimore could possibly add to my respectability or contribute to my comfort. But how that is to be effected I know not. It is painful to me to recur to past scenes, but it seems necessary in this case that I should do it. Two vacancies have occurred in St. Paul's Parish Baltimore since I filled y^e^ Episcopal chair: possessed with y^e^ Idea that I could render greater service to y^e^ Church of Maryland at large if situated there than in any other part of my diocese & that I could render at least equal service to y^e^ parish with any other gentleman, I felt it my duty on both these occasions to let the existing Vestry of that parish know y^t^ although I never would sully y^e^ high Commission I had received by entering y^e^ list as in an electioneering contest yet if the associated rectorship was respectfully offered to me by them I would gladly accept of it, & I dare say that you Sir will understand that in case of y^t^ event I was willing to share all y^e^ labours of y^e^ parish & all its emoluments too, of what nature or kind soever, equally with you. But notwithstanding all this I was passed over in silence, I hope to y^e^ no small benefit of y^e^ parish itself & of y^e^ Church at large & with y^e^ plaudits of the consciences of y^e^ Vestries of St. Paul's. Thus foiled in both instances, I believe by this principle only, & still retaining the opinion that I would be more use to the Church in the city than in this retired corner of the world, I made another attempt afterwards to fix myself in y^e^ new City of Washington, thinking it might in time answer y^e^ purpose, but after a great deal of trouble had in forming a new parish there & just as it was compleat'd two of my pretended clerical friends stepped in, struck up a quarrel between themselves, brought on an electioneering contest for y^e^ Rectorship (in w^ch^ they well knew I would take no part) & by so doing defeated *my* views, & ruined y^e^ parish, or at least greatly injured it. Since then I have set myself down contentedly here at Croom, endeavoring to do what little good I can assured

that y^e^ great Disposer of all events can never will that I should do ill, that good may come of it. After these repeated unsuccessful trials I have all y^e^ reason in y^e^ world to suppose that my principles, if retain'd will consign me to y^e^ peaceful shades of Croom untill it shall please God to translate me from these tempestuous scenes (I hope) to another & better world, & that I shall retain these principles to y^e^ end of my life, God being my helper, is certain."

The bishop's life, during these years, was especially full of difficulties and perplexities. There never was a greater need for ministers of the gospel, and there never was a greater dearth of them. Dr. Tiffany states that at this time nearly half the parishes in Maryland and Delaware were vacant. The bishop, writing to Dr. Bend in 1805, says:

"I suppose you will see Mr. Linde & I request you to inform him that I am well pleased to hear of any Gentlemen of character coming forward into our ministry as we are really in great want of faithful laborers in our vineyard, there being at present a great number of vacancies among our Churches. The Vestry of St. Paul's Q. Ann's have long ago applied to me to send them a Rector, salary about £200 a year. The Vestry of All Hallows, A. A. have by one of their body done the same, salary about 3 or 400 Doll^rs^ including y^e^ Glebe. The Vestry of St. Paul's, Kent have also done y^e^ same, salary 400 Dollars. The Vestry of Shrewsbury, Kent have also applied to me very lately for a Rector, salary 450 Dol^rs^. The Vestry of Emmanuel,[1] Allegany have also applied to me, salary 300 Dollars besides y^e^ County school w^ch^ they say the Rector may have if he chooses it & is capable of teaching it, the salary of which is 800 Dollars a year. Besides these I am sorry to say there are a number of other vacancies in y^e^ Diocese y^e^ Vestries of w^ch^ having adopted I presume y^e^ fashionable mode of engaging & discharging their Rectors *ad libitum.*"

[1] At Cumberland, western Maryland.

When rectors were found they were not always satisfactory. Several times grave charges of immorality were brought against various clergymen, backbiting and slander were rampant, especially during the closing years of the bishop's life, and an unwholesome spirit of rivalry was plainly manifest between the factions into which the Church was unfortunately divided.

A Maryland clergymen, the Rev. George Ralph, had been charged by the Rev. Mr. Gardiner, of the eastern shore, of stealing, drunkenness, gambling, and we know not what else. Surely very serious charges, but Mr. Ralph fortunately succeeded in freeing himself of all aspersions against his good name, and showed clearly that the charges had been brought against him in order to render him ineligible for a parish in Virginia for which Mr. Gardiner was also a candidate. We do not wish to bring the quarrel back to life; we trust that died at least with the contestants, but the following extract goes to show how trying and exasperating were some of the cases in which the bishop had to be involved.

Extract from a letter of Bishop Claggett to the Rev. George Ralph, without place or date, but probably written from Croom about 1806.

"I have now nearly completed the 39th yr of my ministry, mindful of our Blessed Sav. commands to his apostles, & thro them to us, I have always endeavored to live in peace & love with my Bre^{n} & I thank God I have never as yet had one public quarrel with any of my Bre^{n} of the Clergy & I should be very sorry that the first thing of the sort should happen with you; on the contrary I regret that I am obliged to say that the Rev. Mr. Gardiner, since my acquaintance with him about six or seven years ago, has resided in five different states, and he has scarcely (I believe) ever yet left one of those states without convulsing the Church in it by some publick

dispute with his Bre[n]. He professes to be a disciple of the meek and holy Jesus but how he reconciles this conduct with His precept I am at a loss to conjecture. When I first knew the Rev. Mr. Gardiner he was a resident of the State of New York; there he had a terrible public quarrel with Bp. Moore in w[ch] several of his Presbyters were involved to the no small injury of that Church. He next settled himself for about a year in New Jersey; there too he had a most bitter Quarrel with Dr. Ogden at that time Bp. elect of that Church. In his transit from Jersey he stopped a while in the state of Delaware; in this Church they had no Bishop for him to quarrel with, but he himself has told me of a very acrimonious dispute which he had with Bp. White; whether it happened while he resided in Delaware or not he did not inform me. He next obtained the rectory of Coventry Parish in this state, without my interference or knowledge here he continued for three or four years, & when I heard that he was about to quit this Diocese without aiming any of those shafts at me w[ch] had been leveled at so many of my Bre[n] in office before, I began to felicitate myself on the occasion. But alas! I now fear that I was reckoning without my host & that Mr. Gardiner is determined to set you & me by the ears, or to quarrel with me himself."

For the first few years of the nineteenth century affairs in the Maryland Church were at a very low ebb. Conditions, however, began to improve about 1807; the Vestry Act of 1799 had, as we have seen, placed church property in a securer position; several long-vacant parishes, were placed in charge of clergymen of neighboring parishes, who ministered as often as possible, at the direction of the bishop, and who were sometimes assisted by very able and interested lay readers; and efforts were made to raise the standard in the clergy by directing the bishop to withdraw his licence to preach

from any deacon, who having been in the diaconate three years, had taken no steps toward procuring priest's orders; and the meeting of the General Convention in Baltimore, in 1808, doubtless had the effect of arousing some of the latent forces and causing the laity especially to pay more attention to churchly affairs.

CHAPTER X

THE CONVENTION OF 1808 AND WAR OF 1812

The General Convention of 1804, meeting in New York, unanimously voted to hold the next convention, that of 1808, in the city of Baltimore. Bishop Parker, of Massachusetts, was appointed to preach the convention sermon, but before the appointment could be met he had departed this life. Therefore Bishop White, the presiding bishop, wrote to Bishop Claggett shortly before the date of the convention requesting him to see that a preacher for that occasion was provided.

BISHOP WHITE TO BISHOP CLAGGETT.

PHILAD^A *Ap.* 19, 1808.

RT. REV'D & DEAR SIR,

I am sure you will have the goodness to excuse my writing to you on the following subject, in whatever point of view the Matter may appear to you.

You must have observed on the Journal of the last General Convention that Bishop Parker was requested to open the ensuing Convention with a sermon. That Bishop, no Doubt much to your Grief as to mine, is since deceased. What I have to propose to you is that as the Convention is to be in Maryland, you would take order, that it may not open without a Sermon. Whatever pertains either to (word missing) or to decorum has been always held to fall within the province of the Bp. & the Clergy of the State in which the meeting is to be held. And that the question of who shall be the Preacher is become of that Description seems to me very evident. Perhaps I may proceed a step further & give my Opinion, that if there should be any Difficulty about the Sermon the obvious

Remedy is the Bishop's Preaching himself, and even that this may best be resolved on, in order to prevent that Difficulty.

Perhaps I might hesitate to propose to you this Measure, were it not observable on our Journals, that you have always put it out of the Power of any Convention to ask you to open the next by going away before the former closed. Either your Reasons were sufficient, or they were not. In the former Case, you will have an opportunity of showing that you are above the taking of an advantage. In the latter Case you may be considered as making the "Amende honorable."

I take the Liberty of recommending this Matter to your Consideration and am Your aff^te^ Brother,

WM. WHITE.

TO BISHOP WHITE.

CROOM, *April* 25, 1808.

RT. REV^D^ & DEAR SIR,

Your letter of y^e^ 19th of this month reached me yesterday when extended on my back under a fitful Paroxysm of my Gouty Complaint & I seize this little mitigation of pain to inform you that thus circumstanced it is not in my power to comply with your Request, the time before y^e^ meeting of Convention is short, my pains are too great to admit of my setting up long together much more of writing a Sermon in my present Condition & if I had one ready composed I much doubt (unless I should be much better than I have been for weeks past) whether I shall be able to attend y^e^ Convention at Baltimore or not nor do I expect that our Clergy there will think themselves authorized to provide a preacher for that occasion. I dare say that following y^e^ examples already set them they will do the best they can to accommodate y^e^ Convention in temporal matters, but as y^e^ Rule of our Convention with respect to y^e^ appointment of a Preacher to open y^e^ next is either to appoint one itself or to request their President to preach on that occasion or to nominate one of his Clergy to do

it for him, this being our rule I am very much inclined to suppose that they will run into y^e^ same error & conclude that as by y^e^ death of y^e^ Rev. Dr. Parker there is now no person living authorized by y^e^ General Convention to open y^e^ ensuing Session y^t^ business will of course devolve on y^e^ President of y^e^ House of Bishops or on such Gentlemen as he may think proper to appoint & I think they will y^e^ more incline to this opinion when they observe y^t^ matters of much more consequence are committed to him by that body to be transacted if need require in its recess.

In this point of view I have all along taken the matter & in this view I return you my thanks for y^e^ honour extended me & am truly sorry y^t^ y^e^ ill state of my health prevents my complying with your wishes, or indeed at this late hour taking any steps in y^e^ business with my clergy in y^e^ City of Baltimore & I give you this notice of these things that I may not be blamed for matters that I am not at present in a situation to transact and moreover do not suppose that if y^e^ want should happen & y^e^ next Session of y^e^ General Convention be obliged to open with prayer without y^e^ usual Proem it will lose nothing of dignity or usefulness thereby. And here I would wish to close my letter, but that y^e^ Dilemma at y^e^ end of yours, in which my conduct in leaving former General Conventions before it rose seems to require some apology for being fixed between the horns of this formidable agreement. I cannot possibly avoid Scylla without falling on Charybdis. The facts I beg leave to state by way of apology are these: 1st. The Church of Maryland having always supposed that she had controlling power over all her members whether present in Convention or absent has often appointed absent clergymen to open y^e^ next Convention & been obeyed; and as I knew of no rule or usage of the Gen^l^ Convention, to y^e^ contrary I did suppose heretofore that y^e^ House of Bishops in General Convention possessed y^e^ same power. 2ndly. I can

truly say that for 9 or 10 years past I have not been clear of bodily pain for a single day, and that it has often been very violent; 3rdly. You will recollect, my dear Sir, without referring to y^e^ Journals of Convention that there has as yet been no Session of that body since I have been in Bishop's orders nearer to me than your city: the fatigue of y^e^ journey there or to some other Church has always so disordered me y^e^ after getting over y^e^ important business of y^e^ Session I was desirous of returning to y^e^ bosom of my family where most sick people wish to be, without one thought that I can recollect about y^e^ appointment of y^e^ next Preacher: it is true for now almost 17 years I have seen my juniors in office called to that honour without envy (Rest of the letter is lacking). . . .

[Thos Jno Claggett]

According to its plan the General Convention met at Baltimore, May 17-26, 1808. On the Journal appear the names of 14 clerical and 13 lay deputies and two bishops, White, of Pennsylvania, and Claggett, of Maryland. The states of Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Maryland were represented by delegates. No state south of Maryland was represented, which is a commentary on the condition of the Church in those sections. South Carolina, however, elected a delegation of two clerical and two lay members but none of them attended. In an appendix to the Journal a list of the clergy in the various states is given. Under "Virginia" is the note, "No list of the clergy was received from this state." North Carolina is not mentioned. Fourteen clergymen are reported as resident in South Carolina, and a list is given of 11 vacant parishes in the state, "most of them able and willing to support ministers." Maryland is reported as possessing one bishop and 38 clergymen, several of whom, however, were non-parochial. No other state is reported to have as many clergymen as Maryland.

The House of Bishops, consisting of Bishops White and Claggett, met for their first session in St. Paul's Church on the forenoon of Tuesday, May 17. Accepting the invitation of Dr. Bend, the bishops held their subsequent sessions in the rectory of St. Paul's Church. They appointed the Rev. Dr. James Whitehead, associate rector of St. Paul's, as their secretary, received word from Dr. Bend that the House of Clerical and Lay Deputies was organized and ready for business, and returned word that "this house are also ready to proceed to business." The story is told that one day during the convention the House of Deputies sent a messenger to the House of Bishops, who rapped at the door of Dr. Bend's study, and received a unanimous summons from the House of Bishops to come in. Upon entering, the House of Bishops was discovered in session, the members cosily toasting their feet before an open fire, as the day was damp and chilly, and between them was a small stand with glasses and some form of liquid refreshment which the rector of St. Paul's had thoughtfully provided for their material comfort.

The Convention Sermon was preached by Bishop White. Little of vital interest to the Church and nothing that concerns a relation of Bishop Claggett's life was effected at this convention. Before adjournment the House of Deputies named New Haven, Connecticut, as the place of the next General Convention, and, agreeably to the constitution, the third Tuesday of May, 1811, as the time, and passed a resolution that Bishop Claggett be requested to preach the opening sermon. Bishop Claggett, however, did not attend. He set out from Croom for New Haven, but physical weakness compelled him to turn back, and again a General Convention was only attended by two bishops of the Church, this time the venerable and ever-present White, of Pennsylvania, and Jarvis, of Connecticut. At the New Haven convention Bishop Claggett was again appointed to open the next convention

with a sermon, which convention was appointed to meet in Philadelphia, in 1814. But the time found Bishop Claggett very ill, much too ill to attend to duties even nearer home.

Bishop Claggett's episcopal acts beyond the boundaries of his diocese were few, considering the length of his episcopate, owing to the unfortunate state of his health. In company with Bishops White, Provoost and Madison, he participated in the consecration of Robert Smith, as first bishop of South Carolina, in Christ Church, Philadelphia, on Sunday, September 13, 1795, the General Convention then being in session. On May 7, 1797, he assisted at the consecration of Edward Bass, as first bishop of Massachusetts, the other officiating bishops being White and Provoost. Such was the lack of information regarding their fellow-churchmen in those days of difficult communication that the committee in charge of Bass' consecration arrangements wrote to Bishop White from Boston, "We have taken the liberty to enclose our letter to the Bishop of Maryland in yours, as not knowing the place of his Residence, nor the readiest mode of conveyance, requesting at the same [time] the favour of an Answer as soon as possible & that you will take the trouble to convey the Letter to him & solicit his Answer."[1] Claggett also assisted in the consecration of Bass' successor, Samuel Parker, who was consecrated in Trinity Church, New York, September 14, 1804, during a session of the General Convention, the other consecrators being White, Jarvis and Moore. Parker unfortunately lived less than three months after his consecration. In company with White and Jarvis, Claggett assisted at the consecration of Benjamin Moore, as bishop-coadjutor of New York, at the meeting of the General Convention, at Trenton, September 11, 1801.

In 1812 he was invited to assist in the consecration of Theodore Dehon, rector of Trinity Church, Newport, R. I.,

[1] Addison, *Life and Times of Edward Bass*, p. 302.

to be bishop of South Carolina, but owing again to the state of his health he was compelled to decline, as seen from the following letter:

THE REV. THEODORE DEHON TO BISHOP CLAGGETT.

NEWPORT, R. ISLAND, 15 *Sept.*, 1812.

RIGHT REV. AND DEAR SIR,

Your letter, in answer to one I addressed to you from Philadelphia, came safely to my hands. For the obliging expression of your desire, if it were not for the state of your health, to be at Philadelphia on the occasion of my consecration I pray you to accept my very sincere thanks. It caused me, Sir, no little regret, to hear of the afflictive disease, & of those infirmities of age, on account of which you request that application should be made to some one of the other Bishops to attend on that occasion. While the causes that will withhold you from us are greatly lamented by me, with the reasons you have assigned, why you feel unable to be with us, I cannot but be fully satisfied. Bishop Hobart, I presume, will be obtained to go from New York, or Bishop Griswold from this state, to operate with Bishop White, & Bishop Jarvis—And should you hear nothing further from me on the subject you will believe that arrangements have been made for accomplishing this business, agreeably to your wishes. Should there be occasion to recur to your very kind assurance, that you would endeavor to get to Philadelphia in case of necessity (of which I do not perceive at present any possibility) you shall hear of it in good season.

Permit me, in closing this letter to offer my hearty wishes for the amendment of your health, & comfort of your life; & to add an assurance of the high respect and regard of,

Right Rev. & Dear Sir,

Your Affectionate Brother,

THEODORE DEHON.

In October, 1815, as the following letter shows, Claggett was invited to assist at the consecration of John Croes, as bishop of New Jersey, who was consecrated in St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, on November 19, 1815. Bishop Claggett did not attend, this time apparently not because of ill health, but because of previous engagements, but Bishop Kemp, the recently elected suffragan bishop of Maryland, was one of the consecrators.

TO BISHOP KEMP.

St. James Parish, *Nov^r* 1, 1815.

Right Rev. & Very Dear Sir,

I set out yesterday on a visitation to some of y^e^ Parishes in Annarundel & Calv^t^ Counties, where notices had been given of my intention to visit them; on my way here I called (as I came through Marlbro') at y^e^ post office, & there I received a letter from y^e^ Rev. Mr. Rudd of Eliza^h^ Town New Jersey requesting my attendance at Philadelphia on Sunday y^e^ 12th of Nov^r^ next, or if it should not be convenient for at least one of the Bps. of Maryland to attend on that day, then y^e^ following Sunday, Nov^r^ y^e^ 19th is proposed. This Letter of y^e^ Rev. Mr. Rudd's is dated y^e^ 16th of October, & has been so long on its passage that I fear it is now too late for me to write to y^e^ Rev. Mr. Rudd to endeavor to have y^e^ meeting at Philadelphia postponed until y^e^ 19th, & as appointments are made, & notice given of my intention to visit different parishes *here,* w^ch^ I am bound to fulfil. I can not now return home in time to get to Philadelphia by y^e^ 12th of this month. If I had received Mr. Rudd's Letter a few days sooner than I did I should have been happy to have rendered y^e^ Ch^ch^ of New Jersey y^e^ service required, & to have seen my worthy friends who will assemble on y^e^ occasion mentioned, once more at least; but circumstanced as the letter found me, I must forego this satisfaction as also that of accompanying you to

Philadelphia & you will be pleased to remember me affectionately to our Rt. Rev. & Rev. Bren. in Philadelphia & believe me to be, Your affectionate brother,

THOS JNO CLAGGETT.

On Dec. 27, 1802, in the chapel of St. Paul's Parish church, Prince George's County, Claggett ordained to the priesthood William Murray Stone, a native and lifelong resident of the Eastern shore, who was destined to be the third bishop of Maryland, and on January 29, 1814, in St. Paul's Church, Alexandria, Virginia, he ordained to the priesthood William Meade, who became the third bishop of Virginia.

A period of considerable hopefulness sprang up about 1806 and '07 and for the next five or six years there was evidence of some growth and promise of more. Into this hopeful period rudely broke the war of 1812, scattering many families, bringing increased financial hardship, rendering communication and travel difficult and hazardous, and distracting attention from important parish duties of both clergy and laity. The following letter, descriptive of war conditions in St. Mary's County, southern Maryland, was written by the Rev. Joseph Jackson to Dr. Kemp.

THE REV. JOSEPH JACKSON TO DR. JAMES KEMP.

Aug. 14, 1814.

REV. & DEAR SIR,

. . . We can command, as you must conceive, but little of our time here, & can, in truth, call nothing our own. Everything we have, belonging to earth (life not excepted) is at the disposal of the enemy, under the control only of Omnipotence. Our Government does for us exactly what was to be expected, precisely nothing. There is no refuge from impending terrors, but in the hopes presented by our holy religion. These, it is true, are very sufficient for the main

purposes of an earthly pilgrimage; but in a state of civilized society, & as we proudly *talk,* of civil liberty, we are accustomed to look for more, we are accustomed to look for some refreshments in this vale of tears. Thanks be to God, there are some things, & those the very best, the only good, which neither our own, nor a foreign government can take from us: & those we can possess in St. Mary's.

You know what I have long predicted to you, the loss of my parishioners. My prediction is indeed painfully verifying every day. Several are lost or as good as lost already. Dr. Tabbs, who was my nearest acquaintance of the agreeable kind, has moved his furniture to Georgetown, & sent his negroes mostly into Washington County. Dr. Thomas intends moving the instant he can accomplish it. Indeed, who does not? Take a sample of our situation from the following fact: This week being my week for officiating at a private house in the lowest part of the County, I proceeded a day or two beforehand, as having many catechetical exercises to examine, & believing that the British, who stood well up the River, were on their way to visit Mr. Madison. This was the 1st inst. The next day, Tuesday, the wind being favorable down the Potomac, the British had availed themselves of it, & in the evening a little before sunset, whilst I was at tea with a worthy family within about three miles of Point Look-out, word was brought by one of the young men, who had been upon the shore, that a British Ship & Brig were in sight. The gentleman of the house and I immediately walked to the River side, whence we saw, surely enough, the Albion & a brig. We waited till four other Ships, with Schooners, appeared below St. George's Island. They appeared to form a line on the Virginia side, & the Albion, we thought, came to an anchor before we left the Shore. We concluded that they were either intending downwards, to the Islands which they have fortified, or to make a landing in Virg[a] the next morning.

This was our deliberate opinion; but before we reached the house in returning, we were met by a neighboring gentleman who offered a different opinion—that they would land & sweep this part of St. Mary's again. The women, we found, had caught the impression from him. Presently another & another brought in the same opinion:—deducing it from the peculiar firing heard from the British both in the Patuxent & Potomac that day & the day before. The hour of prayer approaching we committed ourselves & all things belonging to us, to the Divine keeping, & soon afterwards retired. I had scarcely fallen asleep, when a young man, related to the family, & an occasional inmate, came into my room to pick up the residue of his clothes; telling me that he had heard more frightful things of British plundering (up the Potomac) than ever. Being under the impression that they had not spent the day merely in sailing down the river, I asked him whether he had heard of their landing anywhere. He said that he had just understood that 25 Barges went ashore in the forenoon within a few miles of the Glebe. Learning from him that the neighborhood was in a general commotion, & that stock & negroes were moving towards the forest, seeing of course no prospect of a large congregation the next day, & considering what must be the situation of my mother & my small family, I concluded to set out for home instantly (about 20 miles remote). Taking leave of the family & giving them my advice & blessing, I commenced an interesting & effecting ride. The women were standing or walking at their doors, whilst the men were gone out on guard. Stock & negroes I also found upon the road. The sadness of the occasion was enlightened as much as might be, by the brightness of the moon,—how serene and gracious is Heaven, while man is intent on his own misery, or that of his neighbour! After calling at different places, and speaking to this person & that, I reached home a little before sun-rise & found throu' Divine goodness, that no

disturbance had come nigh, beside that of fear. The British upon landing had taken a different direction. Yesterday morning, by the time I reached home, I could hear the British firing on the Virg[a] side, & it seems that several smokes were seen, as of burning houses. The firing continued nearly all day, & some after dark. No farther alarm that I have heard of on our side was given, but by a company from the Patuxent, who came it seems, yesterday afternoon, six miles, or upwards, & took a man whom I had married last winter to his third wife, from his own house, & carried him on board their vessel, or to their encampment, till they should be put in possession of a negro woman belonging to him, who is wife to a fellow that had eloped to them. Judge of our situation! . . .

JOSEPH JACKSON.

Leaving the terrified country people of St. Mary's County for more peaceful scenes, we find Bishop Claggett delivering to his diocesan convention of the preceding year, 1813, an account of his official acts since their last meeting, which, although not of prime importance, gives us brief and informing pictures of church conditions at that time. Several of these "Notitia," as the bishop called them, were printed in the Journals of Convention. Only a short summary of this of 1813 was printed in the Journal, which is our reason for choosing it as a fair sample of them all.

BISHOP CLAGGETT'S NOTITIA TO THE CONVENTION OF 1813.

"On Trinity Sunday, May the 24th (1812) the Bp. held a confirmation in St. Paul's Church, City of Baltimore, & confirmed there 32 persons—on his return home on tuesday y[e] 26th of May he admitted y[e] Rev[d] Mr. John Chandler, formerly ordained a Deacon by y[e] Right Rev[d] Bp. White to Priests Orders in Christ Church Queen Caroline Parish in Annarun-

del County—on this occasion y^e^ Congregation was large & apparently devout.

On Thursday y^e^ 18th of June following y^e^ Bp. visited Queen Anns Parish Ch^ch^ preached there to a large congregation, this parish had been for some time vacant by y^e^ Resignation of y^e^ Rev. Mr. Scott, it had no Vestry at y^e^ time; y^e^ Bp. exhorted y^e^ Parishioners to elect a Vestry & to endeavor to procure a Minister—On y^e^ 6th of July the Bp. Licenced Dr. Sam^l^ Hanson to read in Durham Parish Charles Co. then vacant by y^e^ Resignation of y^e^ Rev. Mr. Duncan.

On Thursday y^e^ 15th of this month y^e^ Bp. admitted y^e^ Rev^d^ M^r^ Ninde to Priests Orders in Queen Ann's Parish Church—the congregation assembled on y^e^ occasion was large & y^e^ Rev. Mr. Dashiell preached—& y^e^ next day Friday Bp. consecrated his own Parish Church, in the Town of Upp. Marlbro by the name of Trinity Church, & y^e^ Rev. Dr. Contee preached y^e^ consecration sermon to a large congregation—on y^e^ same day y^e^ Bp. licenced Mr. George Lemmon a Candidate for Holy Orders to read in y^e^ vacant Parishes near y^e^ City of Baltimore.

On the 28th of y^e^ same month Mr. Tho^s^ Horrel of Calvert Co. notified y^e^ Bp. of his intention to offer himself a candidate for Holy Orders & by request y^e^ Bp. licenced him to read in some of y^e^ Rev^d^ Mr. Handy's Churches on those Sundays when he should be absent.

On Friday y^e^ 14th of August y^e^ Bp. visited All Sts. Parish Church Calv^t^ Co. the day proved rainy but still there was a good congregation & four Persons were confirmed y^e^ Bp. preached to them & delivered an address to y^e^ Confirmed. On Sunday the 16th of this month y^e^ Bp. visited Christ Church Parish in Calvert Co. y^e^ Rev. Mr. Handy Rector, this day was more rainy than y^e^ last friday & y^e^ Congregation much smaller on that account than it would otherwise have been, but still y^e^ Bp. preached & confirmed 27 persons.

On the 20th of Sep^{r} following being one of y^{e} Ember appointed by y^{e} Ch^{ch} for admitting Candidates to Holy Orders y^{e} Bp. held a general Ordination in Trinity Church Upper Marlbro & ordained y^{e} Rev. Messrs Thos. Bayne & Noble Young Deacons, y^{e} Rev^{d} Mr. McCormick preached y^{e} ordination Sermon & y^{e} Rev. Mr. Addison preached in y^{e} Evening of that day. Mr. Young has been settled in Durham Parish Charles Co. & Mr. Bayne at y^{e} request of y^{e} Vestry y^{e} Bp. has charged with y^{e} important Cure of St. Peter's Parish Talbot Co.

On y^{e} 6th of Oct. y^{e} Bp. set out on a visitation to upper parts of Eastern Shore & on y^{e} 9th of that Month preached in y^{e} Chapel of St. Peter's parish in the Town of Easton & on y^{e} day following (Sunday) preached at y^{e} Parish Church at y^{e} White (word missing) & administered y^{e} Sacrament there. As y^{e} Parish was vacant there was no Confirmation in either of these Churches, the Congregations at each of them were very orderly & apparently devout & y^{e} communion pretty large; at y^{e} Request of y^{e} Vestry y^{e} Bp. sent to them y^{e} Rev^{d} Mr. Bayne to take charge of y^{e} Parish & he has heard since that he is favorably received & kindly treated by this regular & well disposed parish.

On y^{e} 13th the Bp. visited St. Paul's Parish Ch^{ch} Queen Anne's Co. Preached & Confirmed 9 Persons. The Rev^{d} Mr. Stevens is Rector of this Parish, the Congregation was but small, but respectable. On Thursday y^{e} Bp. visited Chester Parish Ch^{ch} in Chester Town Kent Co. & Confirmed 9 Persons. The Rev^{d} Mr. Turner is Rector of this Parish & also of St. Paul's in this Co. in the Parish Ch^{ch} of which Parish the Bp. preached on Sunday y^{e} 18th & in the evening crossed y^{e} Bay from Rock Hall to Annapolis & on Monday y^{e} 19th Preached there to a respectable Congregation & Confirmed 19 Persons—The Rev^{d} Mr. Ninde is Rector of this Parish.

On y^{e} 23rd of this month y^{e} Honourable judge Key having

removed from King & Queen Parish St. Mary's Co. & declined to officiate there as a Reader y^e^ Bp. at y^e^ request of y^e^ Vestry granted Licence to Mr. ——— Candidate for Holy Orders to officiate as a Reader in y^e^ said Parish of King & Queen. On Sunday y^e^ 3rd of Nov. y^e^ Bp. visited Durham Parish Ch^ch^ in Charles Co. y^e^ day proved rainy, y^e^ Bp. attended at y^e^ Parish Ch^ch^ but had no Congregation he stayed in y^e^ Parish & attended again on y^e^ Wednesday following when y^e^ House was pretty full & he preached to them & Confirmed 20 persons.

On Sunday y^e^ 22d of Nov^r^ y^e^ Bp. visited Sion Parish in Montgomery Co. & preached to a large & well ordered Congregation of Christians & Confirmed 45 Persons. This Church appeared in a flourishing condition.

On Sunday y^e^ 28th of March your Bp. by request of y^e^ ministers of St. Paul's & Fairfax Churches in the City of Alexandria, Diocese of Virginia, now vacant, preached in y^e^ forenoon of that day in St. Paul's Ch^ch^ to a very large Congregation & Confirmed 70 Persons & y^e^ afternoon he preached again in Fairfax Ch^ch^ to another large Congregation & was highly gratified by observing y^e^ good order, harmony & temperate zeal w^ch^ appeared to prevail in these Churches. The Rev^d^ Mr. Wm. H. Wilmer & y^e^ Rev^d^ Mr. Meade were y^e^ Rectors of these Churches.

On Easter Sunday y^e^ Bp. held a Confirmation in his own Ch^ch^ in Upp^r^ Marlbro, & Confirmed 8 Persons several of whom he admitted to y^e^ Holy Sacrament of y^e^ Eucharist y^e^ same day w^ch^ increased his number of Communicants to about 45.

On Sunday y^e^ 2d of May last y^e^ Bp. visited All Sts. Parish Church in Frederick Town; the Congregation was large & attentive, y^e^ Bp. preached to them & Confirmed about 50 Persons among whom were several of y^e^ more respectable Inhabitants of that Town & its Vicinity & some from Virginia & others from remote parts of their state; there appears

to be a considerable zeal for Religion & y^e^ interest of y^e^ Church excited at this time in this Congregation they are building an elegant new brick Ch^ch^ in this Town; the walls are constructed in a very handsome stile & it is already covered in. In the evening y^e^ Rev^d^ Mr. Bower the Rector preached to a good Congregation. The next day y^e^ Bp. set out for St. Marks Parish on y^e^ Maryland Tract in Frederick Co. in company with y^e^ Rev^d^ Mr. Bower, Rector also of this Parish, & on tuesday y^e^ 4th he attended with that Gentleman in y^e^ a. m. at y^e^ Parish Church where they found but 8 or 10 persons assembled, who were desired by y^e^ Rector to notify as many of y^e^ Parishioners as they conveniently could that y^e^ Bp. would attend at y^e^ Ch^ch^ again on y^e^ Wednesday following w^ch^ he did; y^e^ Congregation was not half as large as it would have been had y^e^ Notice been a general one; but still y^e^ Ch^ch^ was pretty full & y^e^ Bp. preached to them & confirmed about 36 Persons. This Ch^ch^ appears to be flourishing & attentive to y^e^ duties of Religion. On his return home on Sunday y^e^ 9th y^e^ Bp. preached in Georgetown in y^e^ forenoon for y^e^ Rev. Mr. Addison to a large Congregation & in y^e^ afternoon of that day in y^e^ City of Washington for y^e^ Rev^d^ Mr. McCormick.

On y^e^ 14th day of May y^e^ Bp. ordained y^e^ Rev. Mr. Purnel F. Smith a Deacon in Trinity Ch^ch^ Upper Marlbro & sent him to officiate in St. James Parish A. A. Co. vacant by y^e^ death of y^e^ late Rev^d^ Mr. Compton.

The Bp. has a satisfaction in stating to y^e^ Convention that he has not been under y^e^ painful necessity of suspending or degrading any of his Clergy this Year. He has however, incumbent on him y^e^ sorrowful Duty of imparting to them y^e^ Death of the late worthy secretary of y^e^ Convention y^e^ Rev^d^ Joseph G. J. Bend whose lamented death will be sensibly felt by his family, by his Parishioners, by y^e^ Convention & by y^e^ Ch^ch^ at large. The Rev^d^ Mr. Compton late Rector of St. James Parish A. A. Co. as mentioned above has also this

year been called from his labours to receive their rewards (as y^e^ Bp. trusts) in y^e^ mansions of bliss. The Bp. has to add y^e^ names of y^e^ Rev^d^ Messrs Ball, Ralph, & Higginbotham to his account of y^e^ Deaths of his Clergy this year, neither of these Gentlemen had any Cures in y^e^ Church when they died & being worn out by age & infirmities it is not likely that either of them would have been able had they lived longer to have resumed their functions in it. The Rev^d^ Mr. Moscross has removed from this Diocese without applying to y^e^ Bp. for y^e^ Certificate required in such Cases by y^e^ Canon of y^e^ General Convention.

It appears from y^e^ foregoing detail that y^e^ Bp. in y^e^ course of this year has ordained 3 Deacons, viz. y^e^ Rev^d^ Mr. Bayne, y^e^ Rev^d^ Mr. Noble Young & y^e^ Rev^d^ Mr. Purnel F. Smith & has admitted two Deacons to Priests Orders viz. y^e^ Rev. Mr. Chandler & y^e^ Rev. Mr. Ninde; that he has Licenced 4 Readers, that he has confirmed 297 Persons in this Diocese & 70 in that of Virginia; on the present State of the Ch^cn^ of Maryland generally y^e^ Bp. begs leave to say to y^e^ Convention: that y^e^ source of Information on this subject derived by him from y^e^ annual Reports of his Clergy formerly required by Canon to be made to him, & now not seen by him until they are read in Convention has very much confirmed his views of that subject to his personal observations on his different visitations, & these views have been made known to y^e^ Convention in y^e^ foregoing Detail & afford us sufficient grounds to hope y^t^ a faithful discharge of y^e^ duties we are now engaged in together with those of y^e^ pastoral office by his clergy generally assisted by y^e^ zealous support of y^e^ Laity & y^e^ Spirit of peace, amity & concord pervading y^e^ whole Society will by y^e^ blessing of God soon crown our efforts with success & manifest to y^e^ world that God's everlasting arms are underneath his Ch^ch^. All which as required by y^e^ 45 Canon of y^e^ general Convention is very Respectfully submitted to the Convention of the Church of Maryland."

CHAPTER XI

ELECTION OF A SUFFRAGAN

For several years Bishop Claggett's health had been gradually failing and this unfortunate condition limited his episcopal activity very materially, his visits of necessity being chiefly confined to the western shore of the diocese. In 1808 he was compelled by ill health to resign his large parish of St. Paul's, Prince George's County, which he had held since his election to the episcopate sixteen years before. Determined, however, to be a rector as well as a bishop he organized Trinity Church, in Upper Marlboro, near his home in Croom, and he remained in charge of this little church the rest of his life. Twice he had an assistant, but at the time of his death he had none. Beginning with the early years of the century there was an increasing agitation for an assistant, coadjutor, or suffragan bishop (opinions differed as to the form episcopal assistance should take) for the eastern shore. Bishop Claggett thoroughly recognized the need of more personal supervision than he was able to bestow and so he sent the following communication to the convention of 1811, which met in Baltimore, June 19-21. He had journeyed to Baltimore expressly to attend this convention but was taken ill immediately on arrival and was confined to the house of Dr. Bend, the rector of St. Paul's, during the entire period of the meeting.

BISHOP CLAGGETT TO HIS DIOCESAN CONVENTION.

Baltimore, *June* 20, 1811.

Rev. and Respected Gentlemen,

Having devoted myself to the service of God in the Christian ministry, for 40 years and upwards, and having sat in

the Episcopal chair for nearly 20 of those years, I cannot, I will not desert the interests of the Church of Maryland. Neither the laws of God, nor of the Church, nor will my own wishes permit this. It is therefore my determination, that all the powers of body and mind, with which it shall please God to bless me, shall be exerted in the discharge of the pastoral duties, to the end of my days.

But the infirmities of age, and the violent paroxysms of my painful disorder, sometimes render me unable to take long journies to the distant parts of this large diocess. Thus circumstanced, and the concerns of our dear Church being paramount, with me, to every other consideration, I apprehend it to be my duty, to hold up to your view the propriety of choosing some "qualified clergyman," who, when consecrated, may assist me in discharging the functions of the Episcopate.

You will be pleased seriously to weigh the matter of this communication in your minds, and act, as to you may seem fit, at the present, or some subsequent session.

Should you, in your wisdom, think such an officer necessary, whether you make choice of him now, or defer it to a future time, assure yourselves you may reckon upon my cordial acceptance of the person, whom you may choose.

Earnestly do I pray the Great Head of our holy church, that he will condescend "to have you in his keeping," and that he will be pleased to guide and direct your consultations, to the advancement of his own glory, and the peace, happiness, and prosperity of his Body, the Church.

I am, Rev. and respected Brethren, your affectionate Diocesan,

THO^{S} JN^{O} CLAGGETT.

The convention voted thanks to the bishop for this communication, ordered its insertion in the Journal, and postponed further consideration until the next convention. Fol-

lowing this convention and the bishop's request for an assistant, the Maryland Church was so violently racked by dissension, largely induced by the Rev. George Dashiell, rector of St. Peter's, Baltimore, that the bishop began to regret that he had broached the subject of episcopal assistance at all. Mr. Dashiell had previously shown signs of insubordination to the authority of the bishop and the convention, and now charged certain clergymen of the diocese with having wheedled and teased Bishop Claggett into the measure of asking for a suffragan. "There were not wanting," says Dr. Hawks, "those who thought that the charge would never have been heard, had not disappointed ambition writhed under the discovery, that if a suffragan were appointed, he would not be the rector of St. Peter's."[1] When, therefore, the convention of 1812 met, the bishop stated in his address that it seemed doubtful whether it would be expedient, at that time, to endeavor to procure an assistant, and furthermore that it was a very momentous question what kind of an assistant should be secured, assuring them that a suffragan and not a coadjutor would be the only one that he could conscientiously accept.

The following day, notwithstanding, the convention proceeded to ballot for "the election of a suffragan or assistant bishop, to assist the present bishop of the diocese in the duties of the episcopal office, and to succeed him in case of survivorship." From the clergy the Rev. Dr. James Kemp received 12 votes, and the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Contee 5. Dr. Kemp, the candidate of the high Church party, thus received the constitutional two-thirds vote of the clerical order, but upon presenting this nomination to the lay delegates, 13 votes were in favor of Dr. Kemp and 11 were against him. The necessary two-thirds vote of the laity was not secured and no election was effected.

[1] Hawks, *Maryland*, p. 378.

The bishop's reasons for addressing the 1811 convention on the subject of episcopal assistance are plainly set forth in the following letter:

TO THE REV. JOSEPH JACKSON.

Croom *June* 17th 1813.

Rev. & Dear Sir,

I received your letter before the meeting of our last Convention alluding to some assertions used in a pamphlet published not long since by y^e^ Vestry of St. Peter's Parish respecting y^e^ Subject of choosing a suffragan Bishop for this diocese, which was brought before the Convention of our Church of 1811 and 1812 by me. My reasons for directing the attention of those Conventions to this subject were the following, viz. The Eastern Shore members of the Standing Committee for the year 1811 (whose opinions I was bound by the Canons to respect) had recommended y^e^ measure to me; our People on that shore (to whom I felt myself under great obligations) appeared to me to desire it; the obstacles to a faithfull discharge of y^e^ Episcopal duties on that Shore by a Bishop residing on this, I had found by experience were very great, as it generally took me as long again to be from home to perform y^e^ same number of duties on that Shore, w^ch^ it did on this; I had observed too that the rule of Convention to meet every third year on that Shore had gradually been abandoned as it had been found impracticable to collect y^e^ members from this shore on that in sufficient numbers to do business. These were the reasons that induced me to make the communications that I did make to the Conventions of 1811 and 1812 & not any imposition passed or attempted to be passed on me by you or any other person. . . .

Your affectionate Diocesan,

Thos Jn^o^ Claggett.

The following letter from Bishop Claggett to Dr. Kemp, written not very long after the attempted election of 1812, also explains the bishop's position and the complications into which he was drawn by less disinterested individuals. Dr. Kemp had, in the meantime, owing to the sudden death of Dr. Bend, left the eastern shore and become the associate rector of St. Paul's, Baltimore, thus materially altering his geographical qualifications as episcopal assistant for the eastern shore.

TO DR. KEMP.

CROOM, *Jan.* 9, 1813.

REV. & DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the first of this month lay longer in the post-office at Marlboro than letters addressed to me usually do owing perhaps to my sending there seldomer in winter than other parts of the year. Now I have rec'd it I hasten to say that I sincerely congratulate you on your recent appointment as I doubt not but that you have judged it most conducive to the good of the Church & your own happiness. . . . My health has been generally worse in spring than in any other part of the year; added to this I have observed that Feb. has been for several years passed distinguished by the inclemency of the weather; it would therefore be very uncertain whether I could meet an appointment to be in Baltimore next month supposing I should make one and have therefore adopted the other mode proposed by you and have appointed Rev. Mr. Beasley to be your institutor. . . .

As to the subject matter of the latter part of your letter viz. the business of an assistant or suffragan bishop I shall at this time briefly and candidly make a few observations with a view as far as in my power lies to remove some erroneous impressions which appear to you to have been made on your mind respecting that business. In the first place I will observe

to you that the plan did not originate with me. I was told by a Gentleman who was a principal actor, that it originated in the Eastern shore associations of y^e^ clergy & I know it came to me first & long before I mentioned it to you from the Eastern shore members of y^e^ Standing Committee & from y^e^ Rev^d^ Mr. Judd who was also a member of y^e^ Standing Committee soon after their meeting at Hadways on y^e^ Rev. Mr. Wm. Wilmer's ordination business, it was then proposed to me as a measure intended for ye benefit of the Church on the Eastern shore & my consent solicited by several of y^e^ members of y^e^ standing committee who had met at Hadways; under this impression I gave my consent; under this impression I mentioned this affair to you; & under this impression I have uniformly supported y^e^ measure until your removal. On my way to y^e^ Eastern shore when last I visited that part of my Diocese, I passed through Annapolis, there I saw y^e^ Rev. Mr. Ninde who told me he had a little before been in Baltimore, & that he had learned there that a large majority of y^e^ vestry of St. Paul's had determined to give you a call to the associate rectorship of that parish; as in my judgment your removal to y^e^ western shore would materially effect y^e^ question of your election as a suffragan Bp. as being contrary to y^e^ original views of assisting me on y^e^ Eastern shore & would have a different bearing on y^e^ peace & happiness of y^e^ Ch^ch^ & of course on my subsequent conduct I considered it to be a duty I owed to y^e^ Church & to you to make you acquainted with my opinion on these points before you should decide on a removal to y^e^ western shore if y^e^ offer should be made to you, & this was y^e^ purport of y^e^ message sent to you by our excellent friend Mr. Goldsbury.[1] I am sorry he appears to have misapprehended me. It is true that in consequence of having heard that our late friend Dr. Bend at his own table in a large company soon after y^e^ decision of

[1] The bishop probably meant "Goldsborough."

y^e^ question by y^e^ last convention threw out something that implicated y^e^ consistency of my conduct & implied a doubt whether I voted for you or not myself? & that he then asked you whether I had not promised you my support? and that you replied the promise was made to you by me but that I had a right to change my mind. In consequence of this information I detailed my concern in the whole transaction to our worthy friend Mr. Goldsbury. I told him that I did vote for you & that it had hapned fortunately that y^e^ Rev. Mr. Davis wrote your name on my ticket & saw it put in y^e^ Hat & that I was sure, if spoken to, he would remove all doubt on that score. In the course of the detail I informed Mr. G. also that while sick at Dr. Bend's during y^e^ session of Convention in 1811 I communicated to that gentleman my intention to make y^e^ communication to y^e^ Convention that I did make & gave him y^e^ Instrument which I had brought with me to y^e^ Convention, to hand in to that body. It hapned that Dr. Bend mislaid the Instrument & did not introduce it for several days; in the meantime my intention became publick in y^e^ Convention & various opinions were entertained by y^e^ members respecting it. The Rev. Mr. Dashiell was one of those who thought it highly inexpedient & frought with dangerous consequences & likely to effect ye peace & happiness of y^e^ Ch^ch^ of Maryland; he came to me at Dr. Bend's together with several other of y^e^ clergy & remonstrated against y^e^ measure using many arguments to support his opinion (w^ch^ also seemed to be the opinion of y^e^ clergy who came with him) & concluded by saying he never would pay obedience to any other Diocesan while y^e^ breath was in my body —all this he said in a respectful manner & he had a perfect right as one of my presbyters to offer his opinion on a subject of such importance to y^e^ Ch^ch^. To his arguments I replied that it was not contemplated that y^e^ suffragan Bp. should have any jurisdiction on y^e^ western shore, that my mind was made

up on y^e^ subject & that I would submit it to the Convention w^ch^ I accordingly did. . . .

With respect to my influencing my worthy friend Dr. Contee in the part he took in this business I assert that y^e^ surmise is without foundation. It is true that I have been in habits of intimacy with that Gentleman for many years & highly esteem him; such is my opinion of y^e^ soundness & independency of his judgment & y^e^ integrity of his heart that I should shrink away with shame from y^e^ idea of attempting to influence him from doing whatever he thought right; and I am confident too that such an attempt as this (word illegible) would have proved abortive if I had been base & mean enough to have made it. I remember well that some little time before y^e^ Convention of 1811 I mentioned to Dr. Contee my intention of making y^e^ communication that I did make to y^e^ Convention I showed him y^e^ rough draft & as he writes a better hand than I do I requested him to copy it, he did so & in a short conversation that then took place between us on y^e^ subject I concluded from some hints he dropped that he did not approve of y^e^ measure. I do not recollect that I ever heard him say how he voted but I believe on y^e^ question of expediency in y^e^ negative & when that was decided against his opinion I believe he voted for you. I believe so I say, because I think he has too much humility to vote for himself, & I know that no person was voted for but you & himself. If any Gentleman gave a preference for him I am confident he did not solicit that preference, & therefore be their motives what they may, is not responsible for this conduct.

I assure you, Rev. Sir, that if I have erred in this business I have none of my western shore friends to blame for my errors. I never gave any opinion myself before on y^e^ question of y^e^ expediency of y^e^ measure, neither did I vote on it, wishing to have y^e^ opinion of y^e^ Ch^ch^. My own private

opinion however all along was that a suffragan would fall for y^e^ *Eastern* shore but not so for y^e^ *Western* as I felt myself competent to all y^e^ canonical duties of my office on y^e^ western shore, if y^e^ Eastern shore could be well supplied. By a perusal of this letter you will perceive that by your removal to this shore I consider the suffragan question so much altered as to leave me at perfect liberty to pursue that line of conduct which I may judge may most conduce to y^e^ peace & happiness of y^e^ Ch^ch^ & I candidly say to you that my present opinion is that y^e^ Church standing in her present situation & with a full view of recent melancholy events w^ch^ have taken place in y^e^ Diocese of N. Y. had better put up for a short time with some privations than endanger its peace by precipitation; I say a short time for my years & infirmities preclude a fear of a long duration. I have governed y^e^ Ch^ch^ of Maryland for upwards of 20 years in a tolerable degree of peace & happiness & it shall be y^e^ study of y^e^ poor little remainder of my life, to pursue y^e^ same object as I am in duty bound to do.

I feel y^e^ weight of y^e^ obligations you have conferred upon me, not only by those mentioned in your letter but also of many others not there enumerated & I sincerely thank you for them all.

THO^S^ JN^O^ CLAGGETT.

The convention of 1813, which met in Baltimore, June 9-11, was exceptionally well attended. Nineteen of the clergy were present and thirty-two lay delegates. In spite of apparent expectations, no move concerning the election of a suffragan was made by either faction. A majority of the clergy were in favor of Dr. Kemp; a majority of the laymen were opposed to him. All realized the impossibility of accomplishing anything in either direction, and so the convention adjourned without reference to the matter, but with excite-

ment still at fever heat, and with contention and tumult in the air.

The following year the convention again met in Baltimore, June 1st. Concerning the approaching convention William Duke wrote to Kemp, on May 2: "I did not know, however, that the choice of a Bishop was to be attempted again so soon. It seems that wherever there is a vacancy there will be someone ready to fill it, but in the present state of affairs a man who *desires the office of a bishop* must be hard put to it to gain a little distinction, or, with the earnestness of primitive zeal, devoted to the service of the Church." Many in both parties believed that the deadlock would bar any attempt to elect a suffragan bishop, and hence the attendance was much smaller than that of the previous year. Consequently the friends of Dr. Kemp and advocates of the High Church party found, upon coming together, by unfair scheming, said their enemies, unexpectedly and by mere chance, said those more charitably inclined, that they had a two-thirds majority of each order, and upon this discovery they proceeded to an election. Kemp received 12 votes and Contee 5, the same as in the convention of 1812, but from the laity 18 votes were cast for Kemp and 7 for Contee, upon which the former was declared duly elected suffragan bishop, by a constitutional two-thirds majority of both orders, and his testimonials were forthwith drawn up and signed.

Immediately the discord and dissension broke forth in a tempest. A paper was drawn up and signed by six clergymen and seventeen laymen protesting to the House of Bishops against the consecration of Dr. Kemp, on the ground (1) that the office of suffragan bishop was unknown to the constitution of the Church in Maryland, and that in consequence any acts which he might perform would be invalid; (2) that the election did not meet the approbation of the constitutional majority of the delegates who were members of the 1814

convention, this reason being based on the assertion that a number of delegates, believing that the subject would not be brought before the convention, had previously left and returned home; (3) that so long as the convention of 1813, to whom the subject had been committed in 1812, had preserved silence, that it could not properly be brought before a subsequent convention without a renewed reference of the subject to the Church at large, and (4) that it was believed that the election was achieved by surprise, and that its results would be detrimental to the Church at large.

These objections were given serious consideration by Bishops White, Hobart and Richard Channing Moore, the chosen consecrators of Dr. Kemp. They did not find valid any of the questions raised.[1] A report seems to have been quietly circulated that the charge of heresy and errors in doctrine would be presented against Kemp, though there seems no foundation to the story that such charges were being considered. Bishop Claggett was determined to preserve an absolutely neutral ground, and not express his views upon any phase of the question until after the consecrating bishops had rendered their report. His neutrality and the reason for it are clearly shown in the following letter which he wrote to Dr. Kemp after the latter's election but previous to his consecration.

TO DR. KEMP.

June 24, 1814.

Rev^{D} & D^{R} Sir,

Your letter of the 8th inst. did not arrive here until friday last, and at the same hour, we were alarmed by the arrival of the Enemy in force, within a few miles of this place, we have been in continual hurry and tumult since— The only son I had with me was taken away to camp, and

[1] The decision of the bishops is rehearsed in detail in Hawks, *Maryland* p. 398-seq., and it seems unnecessary to enter upon the details here.

a few old men left, with the women, and children, amidst a large black population; These things together with my great indisposition will I hope plead a sufficient excuse for my not writing before this. To answer your letter now I am not in a good condition, but by way of justification of my conduct in this business, I think it necessary to say to you, that after having twice asked the Church of Md. (for reasons stated in my communications and published in the journals of the convention) to give me a Suffragan to assist in the discharge of the duties of my office; and after having at the first attempt by the Church to elect that Suffragan (as is well known to you and many others) voted for you myself to fill that office, I think little doubt can be entertained of my willingness to receive you in that capacity (if fairly presented to me, the peace and happiness of the Church not being thereby greatly endangered). It is true I opposed the *mode* of your election in our last Convention, I opposed it because I considered it *unfair, unprecedented,* and *dangerous, unfair* because it was introduced and precipitated through the house at the eve of the convention, without one moments previous notice to the party opposed to it, when I was satisfied; that a few days, or even a few hours notice would have enabled them to defeat the object of the mover—(here in justice to you Rev^{d} Sir, I think it necessary to observe, that I do not believe you were made acquainted with the design before the meeting of the convention)—*unprecedented,* because although not *unconstitutional;* yet the Church of Md. had on account of the importance of the question, to her peace and happiness judged it necessary in all the three preceding attempts to elect a Bp. for this Diocese; to give to all her members a years notice of her intention to do so; and I believe the giving of due notice of the intention to elect a Bp. has been deemed necessary by every other Church in communion with us in America; and as far as I know, and believe, practised

by them in every instance except the case of Dr. Griffith of Virginia, who was elected by that Church on the spur of the occasion; with but a very short notice, and of course a thin convention—and the circumstance, I well remember caused much confusion and noise in that church, that Dr. Griffith resigned his appointment; due notice was afterwards given, and the late Dr. Madison was elected, went to England and was there consecrated—*Dangerous,* the prolific parent of discord, confusion, & schism in y^{e} Ch. and because if drawn into a precedent, (and I doubt not it will be), it opens a wide door for all those surreptitious intrigues, and cabals in the Church, which have so much injured our civil governments and if the Episcopal office in this country should ever become a lucrative one it may lead to Simony itself—for these reasons, and others I opposed it, through every stage of its passage through the last convention, although not permitted to vote against it, when as the result shewed my vote would have put the question to rest for the present—so greatly has St. Ignatius' opinion on this subject been respected in our day and by our Church. Observing however that some of my venerable Presbyters, and some of the younger clergy, who had all along strenuously opposed the measure, had gone over, on the last vote taken on the occasion; by which change the requisite majority was obtained, and charitably hoping, that this change was a sacrifice of their former sentiments to what they thought would best promote the peace and happiness of the Church; I did when thus left in a very small minority of my clergy, for the same reasons, declare to both parties; that all opposition on my part was at an end, and if the Church quietly acquiesced in the measure I w^{d} even go a step further in the business—I am sorry to inform you that a serious opposition to the mode of your election is forming, and a separation threatened—this being the case, I have assumed (word missing) neutral ground, and have

resisted every invitation to sign the Protest—on the other hand I shall do no act till consecration is effected; which may be considered as approving of the mode in which this business has been conducted—as an individual Bp.; I do not find myself clothed by the Church with any power to decide controverted elections to the Episcopal office, she having provided other authorities to whom that power is committed. If these authorities, therefore, sh[d] duly sanction your election, I shall concede this act as the voice of the Church, and as such shall greatly respect it. This together with what I've said in my communications to our convention and my declaration that I did myself vote for you before I had reason to dread confusion, will I hope be satisfactory to the Bishops, and to yourself—it is all which under the existing circumstances, I can say on the subject; for I neither *can,* or *will,* by any act of mine knowingly make myself responsible to God or his Church for consequences flowing (?) from a line of conduct, to which, for the reasons above assigned I was decidedly opposed. With sentiments of high Respect, Esteem & Regard, I remain, Rev[d] Sir,

Your affectionate friend and brother in Xt.

Tho[s] Jn[o] Claggett.

No letter preserved to us shows more clearly than this one the bishop's desire above all else to do what was best for his Church, regardless of his personal popularity or the misconstruction that might be placed on his words and actions. The correspondence of the times shows that Dr. Kemp had been making a quiet but determined and persistent campaign for election to the episcopate for a number of years. Much of the correspondence shows extreme bitterness between the opposing parties and the intrigues of each to outgeneral the other. Kemp and his associates were much better organized than their opponents; in fact the opposing faction seemed to

have no clear program except to oppose the election of Kemp. His opponents in convention, as we have seen, voted for Dr. Benjamin Contee, of Prince George's County, but there is no indication that that gentleman had given any intimation of a desire to be a bishop, or that he lent himself in any way to their schemes. The following extracts of letters to Kemp from his intimate friend, the Rev. Joseph Jackson, indicate that the former was probably not wholly averse to being made a bishop and that the agitation to place him in the episcopal chair was not unknown to him as early as 1811, before the meeting of the convention of that year.

THE REV. JOSEPH JACKSON TO DR. KEMP.

My Dear & Rev^{d} Friend, George Town, *June* 12, 1811.

I write a line or two, under an entire uncertainty, whether it can be of any use, by reaching you in time, though this is the first opportunity since my arrival here (yesterday evening). I left the Bishop yesterday, after conversing with him considerably respecting you, & telling him particularly, that I should write to you, & press you by all means to attend Convention. I am truly solicitous that you should be in place whether or not the election for suffragan may take place. Your absence *under almost any circumstances* may diminish the confidence of your well-wishers & add strength to your opponents, if you have any, by affording a *seeming* instance of want of zeal at a most critical time. If my opinion can have weight with you, I hope you will be in Baltimore & in good time. I can merely say that the Bishop has declared himself ready to co-operate with our wishes; and that I am (though after a sleepless night scarcely able to hold my pen),

Sincerely and cordially yours, as ever,

Jos. Jackson.

p. s. I have found a friend or two to our design more than I expected since my coming over. Our friend Addison sends his respects. J. J.

The next year, Feb. 18, 1812, Jackson writes to Kemp as follows:

"In regard to your promised visit the approaching Spring, I must return to the subject, in order to press the obligation of your promise & original intention on you. . . . Much depends upon your coming or not coming, with regard to an object which you know is & has been much at my heart. The People, I mean in the two parishes under my care, in particular, but not in them alone, are generally strangers to you, except in name & character; whereas with Mr. Geo. D(ashiell) they are generally acquainted sufficiently to be staggered by his fame. They are also, from their frequent communication with Baltimore, very generally acquainted with our much better brother Bend, & many of them have said to me, Is he not likeliest to be our future Bp.? I have uniformly said, that Dr. Bend himself would propose another name, naming that person; but their want of personal acquaintance with him precludes any effect beyond an acquiescence in my opinion. This remaining the case, if unhappily should so remain, would leave the delegates to act rather from their own opinions, than from the known sense of their constituents, & you know the power of intrigue & cabal in times of Convention. Did you know that Mr. Hardy was to have two Parishes in Calvert County, the next above me? His connection with Mr. D. will render it proper that you should visit his Parishes as well as mine, if possible. . . . You will have friends here be assured, if you will not be deficient in those honest & easy & dignified endeavors which the present condition of things demands from you. Retirement will not do for you; & your school! Let it be far from you—& every parochial engagement which would bind the horrid charge upon you! You will recognize the hand of your plain-dealing, but ever steady & affectionate friend & brother,

Jos. Jackson.

We have stated above that a paper protesting the election of Kemp was signed by certain of the clergy and laity but that the bishops chosen to be consecrators did not find the objections valid. These protests disposed of, and their opinions with grounds transmitted to Bishop Claggett, Dr. Kemp was duly consecrated suffragan bishop, at New Brunswick, New Jersey, on September 1st, 1814, by Bishop White, of Pennsylvania, assisted by Bishops Hobart of New York and Richard Channing Moore, the newly consecrated bishop of Virginia.

The newly consecrated bishop, the first and until very recently the only suffragan bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, was born in Aberdeenshire, Scotland, in 1764. Graduating from Marischal College, Aberdeen, in 1786, he emigrated to Maryland the following year and was for two years a tutor in a private family in Dorchester County. He had been educated a Presbyterian, but becoming a convert to the Protestant Episcopal Church he took up studies for the ministry under direction of the Rev. Dr. John Bowie, rector of Great Choptank parish, Dorchester County, and was ordained deacon by Bishop White, December 26, 1789, and priest the following day. In 1790 he succeeded Dr. Bowie as rector of Great Choptank parish where he remained for over twenty years, until he succeeded Dr. Bend as associate rector of St. Paul's, Baltimore, in 1813. In 1802 Kemp received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from Columbia College, and a letter from Bishop Claggett to Kemp, and one from the Rev. Abraham Beach, a trustee of Columbia, and secretary of the board, show that Bishop Claggett requested this honor for Kemp. Kemp's conciliatory attitude after becoming bishop did much to win for him the esteem and respect of the Church of Maryland, and although dissension was destined to be rampant in the diocese for many years, he had, on the whole, a successful episcopate, and was sin-

cerely mourned, when, by the overturning of a stage-coach between Philadelphia and Baltimore, he met an untimely death in 1827, some eleven years after the passing of Bishop Claggett.

The rehearsal of Church broils in this chapter is not intended for the purpose of perpetuating scandal, but rather to illustrate the elements among which Bishop Claggett was compelled to labor, the disadvantages he so valiantly but vainly strove to overcome, the petty jealousies and meannesses which sapped the life from all spiritual endeavor and made the closing years the saddest of his life.

CHAPTER XII

CLOSING YEARS

The good bishop was now well advanced in age, having in 1812 completed his three score years and ten. Soon after his consecration we find references in his letters to a rheumatic and nervous malady which grew steadily more painful and depressing with increasing age. As early as 1794, only two years after his election to the episcopate, he writes to his friend Duke: "I should have written you long before this, but have been & still am severely afflicted with my Nerves almost daily since I saw you. . . . After y^{e} Ordination (set for Dec. 20th at St. John's Church, Prince George's County) I propose visiting y^{e} Churches in St. Mary's & then lay by for y^{e} winter--I am very unable at present to make these appointments good; but I trust that God will assist me with health & strength enough to do it before y^{e} time comes." In 1808 he wrote to Bishop White, in explanation for repeatedly leaving the House of Bishops before adjournment: "I can truly say that for 9 or 10 years past I have not been clear of bodily pain for a single day, and that it has often been very violent." This ill health, unfortunate for his work and depressing to his spirits, never seems to have caused the slightest irritability of temperament, sourness of disposition, or impatience with the frailties of others. Through all the painful years his sunny nature shines forth in his letters, often written in bodily distress, in his kindly ministrations to those about him, and in the record of permanent good achieved in the face of many handicaps.

Because of his health the bishop was absent from his diocesan convention in 1802, 1806, 1811 and 1815, and at the convention of 1803 he was obliged to leave the assembly

before adjournment. In 1806 and 1811 he journeyed to Baltimore to attend the convention, but on arrival was too ill to meet with his clergy. He was present at all sessions of the General Convention except those of 1799, 1811 and 1814. In 1811 he set out from Croom to attend at New Haven, but was so ill that he was obliged to turn about and return to the "bosom of his family," as he frequently and affectionately referred to his home.

During the last three years of his life, that is, after 1813, the bishop rarely left his home. His health did not permit travel to any extent, but he was delighted to see his friends and always kept open house for them. "Mr. Meade[1] and myself," writes the Rev. William H. Wilmer, from Alexandria, the 23rd of February, 1813, "had fixed a day last month to pay you a visit. When the day arrived our river was fast bound in ice, and prevented our crossing. But we were determined not to be thwarted in our purpose, and mounted our horses to ride around by the bridge. When we reached the city, we concluded to call in a few minutes at the Capitol and refresh ourselves with a little repast of oratory at the hands of our sapients. And immediately after entering Mr. Randolph rose and addressed the chair in a speech of 3¼ hours. We were so interested by his manner that we deferred from hour to hour our departure, until, looking at our watch, we found that the sun had already set. Not being acquainted with the road we concluded it to be most prudent to return. It is thus man is often diverted from his best purposes, and like Jacob lingering at Shalem, delays his journey to Bethel, the object of his hopes and the place of his vows."

REV. W. H. WILMER TO BISHOP CLAGGETT.

RIGHT REV[D] AND DEAR SIR, ALEXANDRIA, *April* 19, 1814.

I have this day received a letter from Dr. Brockenbrough of Richmond addressed to Mr. Lee and myself, in which he

[1] Afterwards Bishop Meade, of Virginia.

makes the request in behalf of the Church in that city that we should endeavor to procure your services in consecrating their new monumental temple. Mr. Lee informs me that he has written to you, and I beg leave also to add my solicitations upon that subject. If it be in your power to comply with the request, I doubt not you will be able to render essential service to that important part of our Lord's vineyard. We propose to set out on thursday 28 instant, so as by easy stages to accomplish our visit and return to Alexandria by Tuesday 10th May. This will afford you full time to rest at home previously to your journey to Philadelphia.[1] If you can inform us that you will be with us on Wednesday evening the 27th we will have a hack prepared to take you comfortably down free of expense, and of any inconvenience as far as our attentions can obviate it.

Dr. B. informs us that the pews below (100 in number) sold for $28,450, and that the anxiety manifested to procure them affords a pleasing presage of the good that may be effected by a faithful evangelical Pastor.

We venture to hope that it may consist with your convenience, as we are certain it will agree with and promote your health, at this mild season, to make an excursion having for its object the gratification of your friends, and the welfare of that Church which has long had your warm and constant exertions. . . .

Your affectionate Son in the Gospel,

Wm. H. Wilmer

Bishop Claggett did not take this trip, probably because of his health. On the 4th of May appropriate services were performed in the new Monumental Church, built on the site of the Richmond theatre, which had burned shortly before with an appalling loss of life. Mr. Wilmer preached a sermon

[1] To attend General Convention. Bishop Claggett did not go.

but no bishop was present. The building was consecrated by Bishop Richard Channing Moore, of Virginia, in November, 1814, the first episcopal act performed by him.[1]

Bishop Claggett fortunately possessed ample private means—fortunately, we say, because he received practically no salary as bishop and for a great part of the time his traveling expenses were not wholly paid. In 1806 the convention began to discuss plans for the support of the episcopate. It passed a resolution, acting on advice given by the committee on the state of the Church, enjoining the vestry of every parish to take a collection annually until a sufficiently large sum had been raised for the income therefrom to constitute a support for the bishop, this annual collection to be sent to the person appointed by the convention to receive and invest it. Proper steps would then be taken to secure the entire attention and services of the bishop, disengaged from the duties of a parish. The convention of 1807 resolved: "That it is the opinion of the convention that a principal sum should be raised, for the future support of the episcopate, which may yield the annual interest of 2000 dollars," and appointed a committee consisting of the Rev. Dr. Kemp, the Rev. H. L. Davis, Wm. H. Dorsey, of St. Peter's, Baltimore, and John Beale Howard, of St. John's, Harford County, to consider the subject of support for the present bishop.

The Journal of 1808 records that $353.53 had been collected for the permanent support of the episcopate, which had been placed at interest. The Journal of 1809 records an annual contribution for the present bishop of $260, and $373.92 for the permanent fund, and at the convention of 1810 something over $300 was reported paid for the expenses of the bishop. Thus from time to time Bishop Claggett received small amounts to meet the expenses of visitation, but at no time did he probably receive enough to defray his entire

[1] Fisher, *Hist. of the Monumental Church*, 1880, p. 65.

expenses, to say nothing of a salary. During the latter years he generally made it a rule for the church he visited to pay his attendant expenses.

The two following letters are the last we have from the bishop's hand. The first relates to the coming convention to be held in Annapolis, June 12-14, the reference in the first part being evidently to the unfortunate scandal in which the Rev. George Dashiell, rector of St. Peter's, Baltimore, was the principal actor. The second is a purely personal letter on family matters.

TO BISHOP KEMP.

CROOM, *May* 15th, 1816.

RT. REV^{D} & DEAR SIR,

Your kind letter wth the Pamphlet w^{ch} accompanied it came safe to hand a few days ago. I shall forbear to answer y^{e} Letter or to say anything about y^{e} Pamphlet at present as you have confirmed my hope of seeing you here shortly, indeed we have been looking out for you all this week. It has been my endeavor for many years to promote y^{e} peace & prosperity of y^{e} Ch^{ch} of Maryl^{d} by every means in my power & in y^{e} present situation in w^{ch} she is placed I feel an anxious desire to have your advice & assistance before y^{e} meeting of our next Convention. The Rev^{d} Mr. Jackson called here on his way home, but forgot to mention to me your Request that I would appoint y^{e} Rev^{d} Mr. Wyatt or y^{e} Rev^{d} Mr. Bartow to open y^{e} Convention with a Sermon. He has written to me since and has mentioned to me that omission. Either of those Gentlemen will be very agreeable to me; but I think for reasons w^{ch} will be obvious to you that if Mr. Wyatt's health will admit of his doing it we ought in y^{e} first instance to make y^{e} offer of it to him. I highly approve of y^{e} Rev^{d} Mr. Stevens & y^{e} Rev^{d} Mr. Turner to preach y^{e} Corporation Sermons. You will be pleased to notify y^{e} several Gentlemen of our appointment. All other matters I shall postpone say-

ing anything about until we meet as I write in great pain. Present me most affectionately to Mrs. Kemp & believe me to be as ever

Your sincere friend & brother in Xt. Js.

THOS JNO CLAGGETT.

TO BISHOP KEMP.

CROOM, *July* 23d, 1816.

RT. REVD & VERY DEAR SIR,

I have had a very afflicted family ever since I got home from ye Convention; soon after my Daughter Elizah began to amend her mother was taken ill and then my son Saml fell ill who is still confined to his bed, with a long continued fever & soar Throat in this Situation of things the Post office at Marlbro' was neglected & little thought of by me, so that your late kind letter lay longer there than it would otherwise have done. I seize this hasty opportunity to acknowledge ye receipt of it, & to thank you for it. I have not all ye money by me, & circumstanced as I am with my sick family I cannot go out to procure ye ballance, otherwise I would send ye purchase money for ye Carriage by ye Revd Mr. Wilmer. General Bowie owes me some money & told me some time ago he should be ready to pay me & take in his Bond, but I cannot leave my family now to carry ye Bond & receive ye money & therefore must wait to get a carriage for Betsey until it is more convenient to do so; perhaps they may be cheaper too as ye fall comes on. Mr Wilmer is in a great hurry you will be pleased to present us affectionately to Mrs. Kemp & believe me to be

Your affectionate & much obliged Brotr

THOS JNO CLAGGETT.

While on a visitation to St. James' Parish, Anne Arundel County, in the latter part of July, a few days after the above

letter was written, the bishop was taken ill with his long-seated nervous affection and compelled to return to his home. The attack proved to be the last of the many; he gradually failed, and on the 2nd day of August, in the year 1816, he passed from his labors, surrounded by his family, his household servants and a number of his dearest neighborhood friends. His last words are said to have related to the welfare of the Maryland Church which he had served so long and so faithfully. He had nearly reached his seventy-fourth birthday; he had served for forty-nine years in the Christian ministry; and for twenty-four years he had held the office of a bishop. He was laid at rest in the little private burial ground at Upper Marlboro which he had himself consecrated for family use, and in which his beloved wife and children were afterward laid.

The following letter, written by a neighbor, personal friend, and parishioner gives us some information regarding the bishop's funeral.

JOHN READ MAGRUDER TO BISHOP KEMP.

Upper Marlboro *Aug.* 6, 1816.

Right Rev^{D} Sir,

It is not my good fortune to be acquainted with you, but it has become necessary for me to address you.

The distressing intelligence of the death of that Holy Prelate, the Right Rev^{d} Dr. Claggett, has no doubt been received by you before this. The event has as you may suppose cast a deep gloom over the Society here. His little flock of Trinity Church have indeed serious cause to mourn his loss. Owing to the distress of the family and the indisposition of one of the members of it nothing has yet been done preparatory to the funeral. I am now requested by Mr. Samuel Claggett to communicate to you that it is the wish of the family that you should attend at the Chapel of St. Paul's

Parish, to perform (with the assistance of such of your Presbyters as you may think proper to select) the service, and to deliver a suitable discourse, and they beg that you will appoint some day in the first week of September, after Wednesday, say the 5th, 6th or 7th of the month. It is also hoped that the clergy generally of the diocess will attend, and I will be thankful to you, Sir, to advise me of the most convenient mode of notifying them of the time and place; and any arrangements which you may consider proper and necessary to be made on the occasion to render it solemn & respectful you will be pleased to suggest.

The Chapel of St. Paul's, as probably you know, is situated about two miles from Croom, where in the family burying ground the body is laid—it is intended after the solemnities have been performed at the Church that a procession shall be formed to move from thence to the grave.

My residence is a mile and a half from this place, and it will be highly gratifying to me if you will come to my House and make it your Home as long as you stay. My brother Alexander, with whom I know you are acquainted, will, I expect, be with me at that time.

I beg you will let me hear from you as speedily as possible, and with sentiments of the highest respects be assured, Right Rev^{d} Sir,

I am Yr obed^{t} & humble Serv^{t}

JOHN READ MAGRUDER.

The following extracts are taken from Bishop Kemp's memorial address, which he delivered, as requested in the above letter, in the bishop's parish church on the occasion of Bishop Claggett's funeral.

"A man of God, a veteran ambassador in the Redeemer's cause, *the first prelate consecrated in this country to the apostolick office,* has yielded up his commission to his Master,

and now demands our parting offices of love. He has fought a good fight; he has finished his course; he has kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for him, a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give him at that day. . . .

"Bishop Claggett was a true and genuine son of the Church. Her ministers he viewed as ambassadors for Christ, and as stewards of the mysteries of God. Her sacraments he considered as channels, by which all the benefits of the covenants of Christ, and all the consolations of the Holy Spirit, are conveyed to the believing soul. Her liturgy he deemed the most perfect formula of devotion in the Christian world, constructed on the models of primitive worship, filled with principles of gospel doctrine, and calculated to elevate the affections, and to chasten the imagination. Her Articles he believed to contain all the prominent points of christian faith. And although enlarged and liberal in his views, he was firm, and consistent, and honest in his maintenance of her distinctive principles and character.

"As a preacher he stood in the foremost rank. His manner was commanding and impressive; his sermons copious and replete with scriptural matter. To the imagination of the sinner, he opened the regions of eternal penalties. To the penitent, he displayed all the benefits of atonement, and all the riches of grace. To the striving christian, he offered the encouragement of divine aid, and the glorious rewards of heaven. The wounds and maladies of the unconverted heart of man, called forth his tenderest solicitude, and like a skilful physician, he applied the only effectual remedy, the blood of Christ.

"As a divine, his learning was of the most valuable kind. Having enjoyed the advantages of a liberal education, and possessing the precious talent of a most retentive memory, his knowledge of church history was unusually correct. The best

divines of the church he had carefully studied. And with the fund of knowledge thus treasured up, he was ready for all the exigencies of his station.

"As a Bishop, he maintained the divine institution of the ministry against all attacks; he was sensible of the just privileges of his office, and anxious to preserve its high standing in the christian world. To his clergy he was affectionate and friendly; and generally received from them strong marks of respect and esteem."

"It is not easy," writes the Rev. William Duke to Bishop Kemp, "to know precisely the character of our own feelings, so are they modified, not to say confounded, by the various aspects under which the same object may be viewed; but to me the death of Bp. Claggett is neither more or less than the death of a friend, and the solution of one of those few remaining ties which maintain my fondness for the present world. As to panegyrics, I neither write nor read them; and if other people think they can make a figure that way I leave them to their amusements. I am not, however, indifferent to any circumstances of that event which may have transpired, or to its consequences. I suppose your succession is a thing of course, and that there will be no chasm to be filled up. Elections are a sort of necessary evil whether civil or ecclesiastical."

A memorial sermon, delivered by the Rev. William H. Wilmer, in Christ Church, Alexandria, was printed at the time. Doubtless many other commemorative discourses were delivered by Bishop Claggett's friends, some of which may have been printed.

"He possessed a strong and vigorous mind," said Mr. Wilmer, "which was cultivated by a liberal education, and improved by an acquaintance with men and manners, and with all the resources of general science. His memory was peculiarly vast and retentive, and was stored with an astonishing

fund of entertaining as well as useful anecdote, from which he delighted to draw for the benefit and pleasure of his friends.

"But it was his peculiar glory to possess the character of the Christian, of the Christian Minister, and the Christian Bishop. In all these relations he displayed the erudition of the sound divine, the virtues of the Christian, and the fidelity of the Pastor. Unassuming, modest and unostentatious, he alone seemed unconscious of his talents or his worth. His humility mingled itself with all his actions, and was the result of his genuine piety. His religion was not of that morose and forbidding kind, which would teach us that Christianity is designed to suppress all the social and generous affections, and to wrap the soul in gloomy contemplation. It was piety without affectation; cheerfulness without levity; the effort of Christian benevolence laboring to scatter thro' every department of life something that innocently beguiles it of its cares, while it taught that the end of life was to die. His affability and condescension made one forget that he was in the presence of a superior, by making him feel that he was in the presence of a friend."[1]

In person Bishop Claggett was tall, standing six feet and four inches, of a proportionately large frame, of an extremely commanding and, as age advanced, venerable appearance. His long white hair, curling somewhat, fell in thick ringlets upon his shoulders, giving him a veritably apostolic aspect. All his portraits show a most kindly and genial expression, the entire countenance lighted by a characteristic smile. Always, even in old age, he was blessed with great cheerfulness and geniality and with remarkable ability as a skillful conversationalist. From all accounts, he was, in short, a most excellent example of the finest type of an old-fashioned South-

[1] A sermon . . . on the occasion of the death of the Rt. Rev. T. J. Claggett, . . . by the Rev. William H. Wilmer, 1817, p. 28–9.

ern gentleman, courtly, kindly, charming in manner, generous and hospitable, cultured and thoroughly at ease wherever he found himself.

"With a powerful and rather harsh and unmanageable voice," says Bishop Benjamin T. Underdonk, "and without any claims to what is generally understood as oratory, he was yet, in a very high degree, both an acceptable and useful preacher. His enunciation was distinct; his style simple and perspicuous; and his manner earnest and impressive. His sermons were marked by richness of thought and piety of sentiment, and by giving great prominence to the fundamental and essential doctrines of the gospel. He was, as a parish priest, very faithful in adding to his public duties diligent pastoral attention to families and individuals, including the poorest and the humblest. But amidst all his parochial and diocesan cares and labors, he gave much attention to intellectual pursuits; and might well be ranked among the best theologians of his age and country. His theology, touching both doctrine and ecclesiastical order, was of that truly evangelical stamp, which is so well known in the Church as having had for its intelligent and faithful champions Seabury, Hobart and Ravenscroft."[1]

Bishop Claggett always wore the mitre in performing episcopal functions. He always wore his episcopal robes when officiating in his own parish as rector. He always gave the absolution, even though only attendant on services, unrobed, and in the body of the church. Following the practice of Bishop Seabury, he gave confirmation certificates, many of which are still preserved by descendants of the recipients. He consecrated burial grounds after the English custom.

"Bishop Claggett, so far as I know and believe," wrote the venerable Bishop Meade, of Virginia, "entertained sound views of the gospel, and was a truly pious man. There was

[1] *Churchman's Monthly Magazine*, March, 1855, v. 2; no. 3.

much of the Englishman about him, I presume from his wearing the mitre, and his mode of examining me, that conforming so much to the character of the English University examinations. Besides a number of hard questions in the metaphysics of divinity, which I was by no means well prepared to answer, but which he kindly answered for me, he requested that I would, in compliance with an old English canon, which had been, I think incorporated somewhere into our requisitions, give him an account of my faith in the Latin tongue. Although I am pretty well versed in the Latin language, yet, being unused to speak it, I begged him to excuse me. He then said I could take pen and paper and write it down in his presence; but he was kind enough to excuse me from that also, and determined to ordain me with all my deficiencies, very much as some other bishops do in this day."[1]

Mr. Meade was ordained priest by Bishop Claggett January 29, 1814, in St. Paul's Church, Alexandria, Virginia.

Bishop Meade also relates the following incident: "A singular circumstance occurred about this time in connection with Bishop Claggett's consecration of old St. Paul's Church, Alexandria. Putting on his robes and his mitre at some distance from the church, he had to go along the street to reach it. This attracted the attention of a number of boys and others, who ran after and alongside of him, admiring his peculiar dress and gigantic stature. His voice was as extraordinary for strength and ungovernableness as was his stature for size, and as he entered the door of the church where the people were in silence awaiting, and the first words of the service burst forth from his lips in his most peculiar manner, a young lady, turning around suddenly and seeing his huge form and uncommon appearance, was so convulsed that she was obliged to be taken out of the house."[2]

[1] Meade, *Old Churches, Ministers and Families of Virginia*, 1857, v. 1, p. 34–35. [2] *Ibid*, p. 35.

Bishop Claggett was exceedingly thoughtful of the rights of others and took great care not to tread on the authority of his clergy, but to consult them on every occasion when he found it proper to do so. He was particular that all the business of his office should be performed with due regard for form and dignity, and laboriously attended to many details which taxed severely the strength that he sorely needed for other duties. He entertained abundant charity for all men and in good report and in evil report invariably placed the best interpretation upon their words and actions. He was a man who warmly appreciated his friends, served them loyally and held affectionately to them to the end. His correspondence with the Rev. William Duke would, in itself, almost fill a volume. The Rev. Benjamin Contee, for many years his neighbor in an adjoining parish, was in many respects the bishop's closest friend outside the circle of his family, and except for proximity doubtless a voluminous correspondence would have resulted. Dr. Kemp, Dr. Bend, and his son in the gospel, the Rev. Joseph Jackson, should also be mentioned as close personal friends among his clergy. Dr. Kemp, in his steadfast determination to secure episcopal election, sorely tried the good man's peace-loving, generous soul, but Bishop Claggett remained his loyal friend to the last.

A number of clergymen of various denominations were brought into the Protestant Episcopal Church through their intimate association with Bishop Claggett. His friend Duke in early life was a Methodist minister, and the Rev. Thomas Lyell, a Methodist preacher of the city of Washington, who was closely associated with Claggett when the two were chaplains respectively of the national House and Senate, afterwards became a clergyman of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Claggett was remarkably liberal in his theology, considering the times in which he lived. Numerous instances in his

addresses and correspondence show that he felt most kindly toward other Christian bodies and desired no rights or privileges for the Episcopal Church which might not be secured by other societies, if they wished them. "We wish not to do," said the bishop on a certain occasion, "or even to offer the least injury or offence to our brethren of other religious societies; nor shall we ask for any legislative provisions, which we wish not to every society, which may desire them."[1]

He left quite an extensive library; that is, extensive for those days. He was a thorough scholar, a wide reader, and that he valued books is seen from the following extract from an address prepared in 1794: "A melancholy proof of the decay of religion is the great injury, which has been sustained by our parish libraries! books sent long since into this country for the assistance of the clergy, and the edification of their flocks. Can any interest, Brethren, come into competition with those, which religion involves? Can we then be too careful to preserve writings by which they may be promoted? To us it is wonderful, that men refuse to bestow upon her a part of their substance; but our wonder exceeds, at their refusing to devote to her that little care which would preserve those Books, constituting our parish-libraries."[2]

On May 15th, 1827, the Rev. John Claxton, rector at Upper Marlboro, wrote to Bishop Kemp: " . . . the Rev. Mr. Addison, of Georgetown, was in my parish, or rather at Miss Betsey Claggett's (daughter of the late Bishop Claggett) on last Saturday soliciting a donation of books from her for the Alexandria School, and that she has partly promised them if her brother and the other heirs consent to it. As the books which she would give are many and valuable I should wish to obtain them for the Gen[l] Sem[y] and shall take whatever steps

[1] Address to the Vestries and Members of the P. E. Church in Md., 1794, p. 7.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 6–7.

I shall think proper to do so, or you may recommend. But I know, Sir, that if you would write her a few lines, and use your influence with her you might readily obtain them for the Gen[l] Sem[y] and thus deprive an enemy of power and strengthen your friends. Her father was friendly to our cause, and I believe there is a scholarship in part established in his name, which out *(sic)* to be inducements to the heirs to assist the New York Sem[y] in preference to the Alex[a] school."

We may say in passing that we trust with change of time the friends and advocates of these respective theological seminaries no longer refer to each other as "enemies." Correspondence has failed to discover any of the bishop's books in either of these libraries. The Maryland Diocesan Library, of Baltimore, has a few of Bishop Claggett's books, in one of which is a very creditably designed and executed armorial book-plate, which appears to have escaped the attention, thus far, of all writers on the subject of book-plates.

* * * * *

In 1898, the General Convention meeting in the city of Washington, determined that the dust of Bishop Claggett and his wife should be brought from the obscurity of a Maryland country parish and reinterred on the site of the cathedral now in process of erection in the city of Washington. Thus on November 1st of that year, with dignity and proper ceremony, the mortal remains of the first bishop of Maryland, and the first bishop consecrated in America, and of his faithful wife, were deposited beneath the chancel of the chapel at the cathedral site on Mount Saint Alban, the ceremony being conducted by Bishop Henry Yates Satterlee, of the diocese of Washington, who has since passed to the beyond.

The following epitaph upon Bishop Claggett's tombstone, was composed by his very dear friend and fellow-Churchman, Francis Scott Key, the author of "The Star Spangled Ban-

ner." Key was a consistent and zealous member of the Protestant Episcopal Church, active in its councils and frequently representing the diocese of Maryland in the General Conventions.[1]

"Thomas Joannes Claggett, D. D.
Marylandiae Episcopus primus
Natus sexto nonis Octobris
Anno Salutis
1743
Ordinatus Diaconus et Presbyter
Londini
1767
Et Episcopus consecratus
1792
Decessit in pace Christi
Quarto nonis Augusti
1816
Fidelitate et Mansuetudine
Ecclesiam Rexit
Moribusque
Ornavit
Uxori, liberis, sociisque
Memoriam clarissimam
Et Patriae et Ecclesiae
Nomen honoratum
Dedit."

"I feel y^e^ beauty," wrote the bishop, in the early days of his episcopate to his friend Duke, "of your simile of y^e^ tree stricken with a blast of wind; it is y^e^ Observation of naturalists that y^e^ breaking of some of y^e^ old roots of a tree

[1] See *Francis Scott Key as a Churchman*, by Lawrence C. Wroth, in Md. Hist. Mag., June, 1909, p. 154–70.

or plant causes it to shoot forth new ones & to flourish w^th^ more vigour & bring forth more abundant fruit; may God grant that we, my dear Sir, may never become barren fig-trees; but that y^e^ Storms & troubles of this life may cause us to fix our roots deeply in the only foundation that can support us, & to bring forth fruit one hundred fold! May God bless you in time & in eternity.

Tho^s^ Jn^o^ Claggett."

THE END

INDEX

Adams, Margaret, 3.
Adams, Samuel, quoted, opposing episcopacy, 58.
Adams, Sir Thomas, 3.
Addison, Walter, appointed visiting member, 90.
All Hallows Parish, Anne Arundel County, condition of, 1797, 98–99; condition, 1798, 101.
All Saints' Parish, Calvert County, condition of, 28.
Allison, Francis, 43.
Avery, Waightstill, 10.
Bailey, Thomas, 63.
Barroll, William, 63.
Bartow, Rev. Mr., 166.
Bass, Edward, position during Revolutionary war, 29; Claggett participates in consecration of, 132.
Bayne, Thomas, ordained deacon, 140.
Beach, Abraham, 160.
Beall, William, 103.
Bend, Joseph G. J., 63, 76, 77; appointed visiting member, 91; reports as visiting member, 94–101; letter to, from Claggett, 121–23; death referred to, 142.
Bishops, attitude of church toward office of, 42; two proposed for Maryland, 59–60.
Bissett, John, 63.
Bowie, John, 63; 160.
Bowie, John Fraser, 63; appointed visiting member, 91.
Bray, Thomas, efforts to secure episcopate for the colonies, 59.
Brockenbrough, Dr., 163.
Brown, Anne, step-mother of Thomas John Claggett, 7.
Brown, Aquila, 63.
Brown, Dixon, 82.
Brown, Dr. Gustavus, 7.
Buchanan, George, 82.
Burgess, Benjamin, 32.
Butler, Weeden, extract from diary, 16; letters to, from Claggett, 19–24.
Calvert, Benedict Leonard, 12.
Calvert, George, Lord Baltimore, 3.
Cecil County, condition of church in, in 1808, 107–8.
Chaille, Peter, 63.
Chandler, Joseph, ordained to priesthood, 138.
Chase, Samuel, 45, 76, 77.
Chew, John Hamilton, 8.
Chew, Samuel, 8.
Chew, Thomas John, 63.
Childs, Zachariah, 32.
Church, condition of, during Revolutionary war, 30; organization of, in Maryland, 38 *et seq.*
Church of England in colonial Maryland, 3–4; established, 5.
Clagett, Edward, 7.
Clagett, Eleanor, 7.
Clagett, Richard, 7.
Clagett, Samuel, father of Thomas John, 1, 7, 8.
Clagett, Thomas, 1, 3, 6, 7.
Claggett, Charles Nicholas, son of Thomas John Claggett, 29.
Claggett, Edward, 2, 3.
Claggett, Elizabeth Gantt, mother of Thomas John Claggett, 7.
Claggett, Elizabeth Laura (wife of Josiah Young), daughter of Thomas John Claggett, 29.
Claggett, George, 2.
Claggett, Mary (wife of John Eversfield of Matthew), daughter of Thomas John Claggett, 29.
Claggett, Mary Gantt, wife of Thomas John Claggett, 28.
Claggett, Nicholas, 2.
Claggett, Priscilla, sister of Thomas John, 7.
Claggett, Priscilla Elizabeth (wife of Colonel John Hamilton Chew), daughter of Thomas John Claggett, 29.
Claggett, Richard, 2, 3.
Claggett, Robert, 2.
Claggett, Samuel, half-brother of Thomas John, 8.
Claggett, Samuel, son of Thomas John Claggett, 29, 167, 168.
Claggett, Thomas John, born, 1; ancestry, 1–3; boyhood, 8; graduates College of New Jersey, 8; college contemporaries of, 9–10; studies theology, 12, 15; Master of Arts from College of New Jersey, 15; voyage to England, 15; ordained deacon, 15; priest, 15; experiences in England, 17; return to Maryland, 17; curate All Saints' Parish, Calvert County, 25; rector of same, 25; marries, 28; children of, 29; attitude during Revolutionary war, 29–30; resigns parish, 30; officiates St. Paul's, Prince George's County, 30; rector Christ Church, Queen Caroline Parish, Anne Arundel County, 30; rector St. James, Anne Arundel County and All Saints', Calvert County, 30–31;

rector Trinity Church, Upper Marlboro, 31; Doctor of Divinity, 32; elected bishop, 62; testimonial for consecration, 62; consecration of, 65; certificate of consecration of, 66; resigns St. James' Parish, Anne Arundel County, and becomes rector of St. Paul's Parish, Prince George's County, 67; salary and expenses as bishop, 69–70; first convention report, 70–71; convention address, 1797, 89–92; appointed to preach 1811 convention sermon, 131; appointed to preach 1814 convention sermon, 131; participates in consecration of Robert Smith, Edward Bass, and Samuel Parker, 132; report to convention, 1813, 138–43; rector Trinity Church, Upper Marlboro, 144; address to 1811 convention, 144–5; ill health of, 162–3; salary and expenses, 165–6; death of, 168; funeral arrangements, 168–9; extract from funeral sermon by Kemp, 169–71; personality, characteristics, etc., 170–6; chaplain of U. S. Senate, 175; library of, 176–7; removal of remains to cathedral site, Washington, 177; epitaph, 178.
Claggett, Thomas John, son of Bishop Claggett, 29.
Claxton, John, writes to Jackson regarding Claggett's books, 176–7.
Colebatch, Joseph, invited to become suffragan for the colonies, and sketch of, 58–59.
Coleman, John, 63; appointed visiting member, 91; report as visiting member, 108–9.
Common prayer, Book of, proposed revision, 48–50.
Compton, Jno. W., 63.
Contee, Benjamin, report as visiting member, 110–11; report of visitations, 111–3; journal of visitation to eastern shore with Claggett, 117–9; candidate for suffragan bishop, 146; intimate friendship with Claggett, 175.
Cook, William, 77.
Cramp, John, ordained deacon, 17.
Croes, John, Claggett invited to assist at consecration of, 134.
Cromwell, Richard, 63.
Dade, Townshend, 63; deposed from ministry, 72.
Dashiell, George, attitude of, toward election of suffragan, 146, 150.
Davis, H. L., report as visiting member, 105–8; on committee, 165.
De Butts, John, 63.
Dehon, Theodore, Claggett invited to assist at consecration of, 132; letter to Claggett, 133.
Delaware, church in, proposes joining Eastern Shore of Maryland to elect bishop, 114.
Dentt, Hatch, 63.
Dissenters eligible as vestrymen, 6.
Dorsey, Deborah, 7.
Dorsey, William H., 165.
Duke, William, letter from Claggett to, 43–44; ditto, 48–50; ditto, 54-56; signs Claggett testimonial, 63; letter from Claggett to, 67–68; "Testimonium" of, for use in Kentucky, 115–6; writes to Kemp regarding election of a bishop, 153; to same on death of Claggett, 171; intimate friendship with Claggett, 175.
Eden, Robert, 43.
Edwards, Jonathan, 9.
Elkridge Parish, condition of, 1796, 96–97.
Ellsworth, Oliver, 10.
Episcopate, fund for support of, 165.
Episcopate, struggle for, 57 *et seq.*
Eversfield, John, diary of, 1; wife of, 7; tutor of Thomas John Claggett, 8; sketch of, 12–13.
Ferguson, Colin, 63.
Frederick, condition of church in 1800, 103.
Gantt, Edward, grandfather of Thomas John Claggett, 7, 8.
Gantt, Dr. Edward, letter to Basil Waring, 18.
Gantt, Edward, father-in-law of Thomas John Claggett, 28.
Gantt, Edward, 63.
Gantt, Elizabeth, mother of Thomas John Claggett, 7.
Gantt, Mary, wife of Thomas John Claggett, 28.
Gardiner, Rev. Mr., 124.
Gates, Thomas, 40.
General convention, meets in Baltimore, 1808, 127 *et seq.*
Godman, Samuel, 63.
Goldsborough, Robert, 45.
Gordon, John, 40.
Gott, Ezekiel, 32.
Gouder, Sir Robert, 2.
Griswold, Alexander Viets, 133.
Grosh, Eleanor, first person confirmed by Claggett, 68.
Hagerstown, condition of church, 1800, 103.
Hall, John, 32.
Hanson, Samuel, licenced as reader, 139.
Harwood, Richard, Jr., 63.
Harrison, Elisha, 63.
Harrison, Richard, 32, 60, 63.
Haward, J. E., 63.
Hawks, Francis L., quoted, 64–65; 92–93; 146.
Hazard, Ebenezer, 9.
Higinbotham, R., 63.
Hindman, John, 63.
Hobart, John Henry, 133; considers objections to Kemp's election, 154; assists at consecration of Kemp, 160.
Harrel, Thomas, 139.
Howard, James, 63.
Howard, John Beale, 165.

Jackson, Joseph, letter to Claggett, 36–37; letter to Kemp, 135–38; letter from Claggett, 147; letter to Kemp, 158; friendship with Claggett, 175.
Jarvis, Abraham, assists at consecration of Samuel Parker and Benjamin Moore, 132.
Jesuits in colonial Maryland, 3–4.
Keene, John, 63.
Keene, Samuel, 38, 39, 40, 63; appointed visiting member, 90; appointed missionary to Kentucky, 116.
Kemp, James, signs Claggett testimonial, 63; appointed visiting member, 91; report as visiting member, 104–5; candidate for suffragan bishop, 146; letter from Claggett, 148; elected suffragan bishop, 153; contest concerning election, 153–8; letter from Claggett, 154; letter from Jackson, 158; consecrated bishop, 160; sketch of his life, 160–1; on committee, 165; letters from Claggett, 166–7; letter from John Read Magruder, 168–9; extract from Claggett funeral sermon, 169–71; friendship with Claggett, 175.
Kent County, condition of church in, in 1808, 105–7.
Kentucky, missionary work proposed in, 115–6.
Key, Edmund, 63.
Key, Francis Scott, epitaph of Claggett, written by, 178.
Key, Philip Barton, 77.
Laird, James, conducts a distillery, 72.
Lemmon, George, licenced as reader, 139.
Libraries, parish, 73.
Lloyd, James, 63.
Lutherans in colonial Maryland, 4, 5.
Lyell, Thomas, chaplain national house of representatives, 175.
McPherson, Alexander, 63.
McPherson, Walter, 63.
Madison, James, participates in consecration of Claggett, 65; of Robert Smith, 132.
Magowan, Walter, 33.
Magruder, John Read, letter to Kemp, 168–9.
Manning, James, 9.
Martin, Luther, 10, 76.
Maryland, settlement and early history, 3–6; population, 19; organization of church in, 38 *et seq.*
Meade, William, ordained to priesthood, 135; mentioned, 163; writes on characteristics of Claggett, 173–4.
Messenger, Joseph, 63.
Ministers, appointment of, in colonial Maryland, 5, 25; morals of, 26–28; support of, 72–73; urgent need of, in Maryland, 123.
Monumental Church, Richmond, letter from Wilmer to Claggett concerning dedication, 164; consecrated, 165.
Moore, Benjamin, consecrated, 132; assists at consecration of Samuel Parker, 132.
Moore, Richard Channing, considers objections to Kemp's election, 154; assists at consecration of Kemp, 160; consecrates Monumental Church, Richmond, 165.
Negroes, attitude of church toward, 36.
Niell, Hugh, writes to Bishop of London, 28; quoted, 43.
Ninde, Rev. Mr., ordained to priesthood, 139.
O'Bryon, James, 63.
Oliver, Thomas F., 76.
Paca, William, 39, 45.
Parishes in colonial Maryland, 4, 5, 18.
Parker, Samuel, position during Revolutionary war, 29; Claggett participates in consecration of, 132.
Perry, William, 63.
Pew-rent scheme recommended by Claggett, 72.
Presbyterians in colonial Maryland, 4, 5; opposition to episcopacy, 58.
Protestant Episcopal, first recorded use of name, 42.
Provoost, Samuel, position during Revolutionary war, 29; presides at consecration of Claggett, 65; assists at consecration of Robert Smith and Edward Bass, 132.
Pryce, William, delegate to Maryland convention, 114.
Puritans in colonial Maryland, 4, 5; opposition to episcopacy, 58.
Quakers in colonial Maryland, 4, 5.
Queen Anne's County, condition of church in, in 1808, 105.
Queen Caroline Parish, Anne Arundel County, condition of, 1798, 101.
Ralph, George, 124.
Ramsay, David, 9.
Randall, John, 63.
Rawlings, John, 63.
Read, Thos., 63; appointed visiting member, 91; report as visiting member, 103–4.
Reeve, Tapping, 9.
Revolutionary war, 29–30.
Ridgley, Charles, 7.
Roman Catholics in early Maryland, 3–5.
St. Anne's Church, Annapolis, 98, 101.
St. James' Parish, Anne Arundel County, description of, 31–36; condition of, 1797, 100; condition, 1798, 101.
St. James' Parish, Harford County, condition in 1808, 108–9.
St. Margaret's Parish, Westminster,

Anne Arundel County, condition of, 1796, 94–95.
St. Paul's Parish, Prince George's County, articles purchased for church, 14.
St. Paul's Parish, Baltimore, Claggett intimates desire to become associate rector, 122.
St. Peter's Parish, Montgomery County, condition in 1800, 103.
St. Peter's Church, Talbot County, consecrated, 119; condition, 1797, 102–3.
St. Thomas' Parish, Baltimore County, condition of, 1796, 95–96.
Satterlee, Henry Yates, conducts services at removal of Bishop Claggett's remains, 177.
Schools, grammar, in colonial Maryland, 8.
Scott, Gustavus, 76.
Seabury, Samuel, position during Revolutionary war, 29; consecrator of Claggett, 65.
Sharpe, Horatio, Governor of Maryland, 25, 28.
Slaves, letter to Claggett respecting, 36–37.
Smith, Purnel F., ordained deacon, 143.
Smith, William, 38, 40; elected bishop of Maryland, 43; sketch of, 44–48.
Sprigg, Richard, Jr., 63.
Stephens, Daniel, quoted, 116–7.
Stevens, Rev. Mr., 166.
Stone, William Murray, ordained to priesthood, 135.
Suffragan bishop, election of a, 144 *et seq.*
Terrick, Richard, Lord Bishop of Peterborough (later of London), 7, 15; letter to, from Claggett, 27.
Tiffany, C. C., quoted, 45–47, 57–8.
Tilghman, James, 33.
Travel, difficulties of, 120.
Trinity Church, New York, Claggett consecrated in, 65.
Turner, Rev. Mr., 166.
Underdonk, Benjamin T., writes on characteristics of Claggett, 173.
Veazey, Thomas B., 63.
Vestry act, a new, 76 *et seq.*
Vestrymen in colonial Maryland, 5.
Visiting members, plan of, 83 *et seq.*
Walker, Archibald, 63.
War of 1812, conditions caused by, 135–38.
Wardens in colonial Maryland, 5.
Waring, Basil, letter from Edward Gantt, 18.
Warfield, Edwin, 7.
Washington, Episcopal church in, proposed, 69; Claggett intimates desire to be rector in, 122.
Washington College, 39, 45.
Weems, John, 32, 63.
Weems, Mason Locke, criticism of action of, 51–52; signs Claggett testimonial, 63.
Weems, William, 32.
West, William, 40; letter from Claggett to, 50–52.
White, John, 63.
White, William, position during Revolutionary war, 29; letter from Claggett to, 52–53; consecrator of Claggett, 65; letter to Claggett, 127–8; letter from Claggett to, 128–30; preaches 1808 convention sermon, 131; participates in consecration of Smith, Bass and Parker, 132; considers objections to Kemp's election, 154; consecrates James Kemp, 160.
Whitefield, George, 11.
Whitehead, James, appointed secretary House of Bishops, 131.
Wilmer, James Jones, 38.
Wilmer, William H., writes to Claggett, 163; extract from sermon on death of Claggett, 171–2.
Wootton, Richard, 63.
Worrell, Edward, 63.
Wyatt, Rev. Mr., 166.
Young, Noble, ordained deacon, 140

92
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